

STOURBRIDGE

the chronicle

Heap heights

Residents tired of living in shadow of trash mountain

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**Memory Lane**

Grandma's bostin' fittle kept all the family fed

Page 6

DKs triumph

Going gets tough but team up to the task

Page 40

**Scheme for more than 300 homes welcomed**

DETAILS of a multi-million pound development of more than 300 new homes in Pensnett have been unveiled.

A planning application for the development has been lodged with Dudley Council officials.

The houses and apartments would be built on two plots of land next to Tansey Green Road and Oak Lane.

The scheme would offer a range of housing from low-cost homes to five-bedroom detached properties.

Councillor Sue Greenaway, who represents Pensnett, has welcomed the development, saying it will help to transform the area.

"I'm really pleased with the plans," she said. "It looks like an attractive development which will improve the area and help tidy it up."

"I'm happy with the scheme and think it will be really good for Pensnett."

The development would include 335 homes with a mixture of two and three-storey townhouses and flats.

Around five acres of public open space will be provided as part of the proposals.

Outline planning permission was granted for the scheme two years ago after plans were submitted by landowners London & Cambridge Properties (LCP).

Family make plea to killer

THE family of murdered former teacher Betty Yates have urged her killer to hand themselves into police.

Speaking publicly for the first time about the tragedy, her son and daughter said they were "completely bewildered" as to why anyone would want to hurt their mother. The 77-year-old former teacher was beaten with her own walking stick and stabbed at her home off Dowles Road, in Bewdley. Her body was discovered on January 4.

Daughter Hazel Costello and son David Yates told a press conference that they had been left "devastated" by their loss.

LAP DANCE PLAN FOR NIGHT SPOT

A LANDMARK nightclub building in Stourbridge is the wrong location for a lap dancing club and would "demean" the town, campaigners claim.

Bosses of Stourbridge Academy have unveiled plans to create the club underneath a cabaret room on the site and have promised there will be nothing "seedy" about it.

It comes two years after a lap dancing club closed at the same site, in Hagley Road, after just one week following complaints from residents. That was when it was under different management.

But manager Roger Bishton insists this club will be "discreet" and that he still has "big plans" for the rest of the venue, which used to be called The Picture House.

He recently opened a new cabaret room on the second floor for live acts and also hopes to invite former England footballers along to Euro 2012 events during the summer's big European football tournament.

The lap dancing venue will not be advertised outside and he insists that the plans have not attracted any formal objections so far.

Sign

"People won't even know it's there," he said.

"There will be no huge sign outside and no scantily clad women trying to get people in."

"We have done everything we are supposed to do with regards to the application.

"We have advertised the plans and there have been no objections."

"There is nothing underhand or seedy about this," he added.

But ward councillor

by Adam Burling

Nicolas Barlow said: "It is very disappointing and it would demean the area."

"I think the general consensus around Stourbridge and the surrounding area is that we do not want this type of establishment here."

"It seems very strange if this venue will be holding something like an '80s night with tribute acts when in a different part of the building there will be a strip club."

The plans will go before Dudley Council's licensing committee on Tuesday, February 7.

The council has previously decided that there should be no more than one "sexual entertainment venue" in Stourbridge.

The only other club of this kind, Heaven, in Lower High Street, recently closed.

Stourbridge Academy re-opened 18 months ago after a £50,000 renovation.

Last September Mr Bishton told of his plans for the premises, saying he was going to "make it a place to put the town on the map".

An old ten-pin bowling alley, that had been installed by past owners, was ripped out on the second floor to open up the room for functions.

Have a go at apprentice show



Sam Wood, aged 18, from Kingswinford, urges teenagers to visit the event for potential apprentices

FREE events promoting apprenticeships, where teenagers can 'have a go' at a trade and get expert advice, are being held across the Black Country.

The Real Apprentice Showcase is running at Brierley Hill Civic Hall today (Thursday) from 3.30 to 8pm, then at The Public in West Bromwich on Tuesday and at Molineux on Thursday, February 9. The events are organised by the

Black Country Training Group, based in Oldbury. For Sam Wood, from Kingswinford, a visit two years ago to The Real Apprentice Showcase landed him an apprenticeship and subsequently a job as an office administrator.

To find out more call free on 08000 321222 or go to the websites www.apprenticeships.org.uk or the alternative www.therealapprentice.org.uk

Bid to cut speed near schools

A CAMPAIGN has been launched to get the speed limit on a busy road outside two Brierley Hill schools slashed from 40mph to 20mph.

Concerns have been raised about the safety of pupils attending Thorns Primary and Old Park schools, which are based on the same site off Thorns Road. Pupils have difficulty crossing

the busy dual carriageway, which is a short distance from the Merry Hill Centre, despite a lollipop patrol being on duty.

Parents are also concerned about parents dropping off and collecting children at the beginning and end of each school day.

Stourbridge MP Margot James has

visited the schools to discuss the concerns and to find out about projects to teach youngsters about road safety.

She has now launched a campaign to get a 20mph limit installed near to the school. Dudley Council has already agreed to look at introducing 20mph zones outside schools where appropriate.

Hospitals' uneaten meals cost thousands

THOUSANDS of meals are being sent back uneaten by hospital patients in Dudley, costing the NHS around £209,000 last year, according to latest figures.

Across the West Midlands and Staffordshire, more than £890,000 is being wasted on uneaten meals.

New menus are now being introduced or meals reviewed at some hospitals in the region to reduce wasted food.

Bosses at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital said they were now looking "into options for alternative methods of the delivery of patient meals."

Trust

Figures from the NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care showed six per cent out of 821,000 meals served last year by The Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – which runs Russells Hall – were wasted. That cost around £209,000 during 2010/11.

Meanwhile, just over nine per cent of the 983,895 meals served by Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust were thrown away at a cost of £227,466 during the same time and 15 per cent of meals were sent back out of the 848,100 served in Wolverhampton at a cost of £365,107.

TV comic is to visit town

A COMEDIAN about to star in his own BBC documentary is coming to Stourbridge. Wheelchair-bound Laurence Clark appears at An Evening of Comedy and Song at the Edward Rutland in Stourbridge High Street on February 13.

He has just finished filming a documentary for BBC One called Jokes, Nappies and Wheelchairs, which follows him and his wife Adele as they prepare for the birth of their second child. Tickets are £5 each and available from the Edward Rutland and The Samson and Lion, Wordsley.

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Region hit hard by loss of manufacturing jobs

THE West Midlands has been the worst hit region in the country in terms of loss of manufacturing jobs since the last recession, a new study claims.

The number employed in manufacturing fell by 119,000 from 426,000 in 2006-2007 to 307,000 in 2010-2011. Sandwell lost 11,300 over the same period while Walsall lost

6,300 jobs, Wolverhampton saw 5,200 jobs go and Dudley 2,700. The Black Country has been particularly hard hit. In 2009 there were 69,000 employed in manufacturing, half that of a decade earlier.

Staffordshire was the county seeing the biggest fall in manufacturing jobs with a reduction of 21,100. Worcestershire saw a fall of 20,100 over the same period.

Recession

A raft of small businesses fell victim to the credit crunch and recession.

The study for the GMB union found manufacturing job losses have been running at almost 3,400 a week across the country.

Paul Kenny, general secretary of the GMB, said: "In the UK as a whole the first four years of this recession has cost 706,300 manufacturing jobs. This is on top of the 1.25m fall between 1994/95 and 2006/07 at an average of 2,005 job losses a week."

"This is the most tragic economic story from Britain in the last two decades, he added.

ABOUT £130,000 will be spent on transforming a disused bowling green in Cradley into a children's play area.

Work to bring the land in Homer Hill Park back into use should be completed by the end of this month.

The park's friends group has been working to secure the funding to get the work done. Ward councillor and group chairman, Richard Body, said: "We are really pleased and relieved all this work is now going ahead."

"As we are a small group, we have had to work hard and it is a fantastic achievement for everyone."

The money has come from various sources, including cash paid to Dudley Council by developers. These are called 106 agreements.

Ghostbusters caddy comeback



THERE will soon be something strange in the neighbourhood.

Finishing touches are being put to a Black Country replica of the car from the hit film Ghostbusters.

It is been a labour of love for more than two years but now the finish is in sight for owner Paul Harborne and mechanic Tim Jordan.

They have been painstakingly transforming the 1960 Cadillac Miller-Meteor into the Ecto-1a at Tricklucks bodyshop in Kingswinford.

Chassis

They believe they are just two months from completing the project which they first started in December 2009.

Since then, a new chassis has been fitted to the classic vehicle as well as lights and mock ghost-capturing gear.

They have begun painting the bodywork and will soon be ready to decorate put on the famous Ghostbusters logos.

Father-of-five Mr Harborne, aged 48, said they hoped to get the car completed by the end of March.

He then plans to rent out the vehicle for parties and weddings. "It will look great when it is finished," he added.

Meetings for issues of estate

A SERIES of tenants and residents association meetings are being held during February.

The meetings are being held to encourage locals to get involved in the running of their estates and raise issues.

In Brierley Hill the Dudley Fields group will meet on Thursday, February 9, at Brockmoor Community Centre at 7pm.

Vicarage Prospect association meets on February 8 at the Congregational Church, Grange Road, at 7.30pm, while Bowling Green residents can get together on February 21 at Saltwells Education Centre at 7.30pm.

Baby group wins award

A BLACK Country support group set up to help families of premature babies has won a national award.

Dudley Borough Bliss Family Group has won the Bliss annual Support Group of the Year award at the Mother & Baby Big Heart Awards.

Mums Joanne Weston from Stourbridge and Christina Nicholls, from Brierley Hill, started the group in 2009.

They and volunteer and group organiser Rebecca Cottingham, from Pensnett, were presented with the award at the Park Lane Hilton, London.

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MP welcomes pledge to end cash for scrap

Fit for charity purpose



Alison Blakeway, events co-ordinator for the air ambulance, top left, receives the cheque from Jean Hughes, aged 75, with, front from left, Daphne Roberts, 88 and Thelma Williams, 84, at the Wordsley centre. KEEP-FIT fans in the Black Country have been exercising their fundraising skills to bring in £5,000 for the Midlands Air Ambulance.

Members of the Jean Hughes Keep Fit Classes, in Wordsley, have raised the cash with regular raffles, bring-and-buy sales and fish and chip suppers.

The 100-strong group has handed

A BLACK Country MP, who campaigned for a change in the law to clamp down on metal thefts, is delighted that the Government has announced legal moves to crack down on the thieves.

Chris Kelly, Conservative MP for Dudley South, said a pledge by Home Secretary Theresa May to ban cash payments for scrap metal would "radically reduce" the problem of stolen manhole covers, plaques, railway and sub-station cables and the stripping of church roofs.

The Home Secretary is also going to remove a £1,000 limit on fines as part of laws being introduced in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill. Most crucially, it would make it a criminal offence to pay for scrap metal in cash.

A local recycling firm, Mason Metals of Brierley Hill, has pre-empted the move by introducing its own ID card for customers (see page 19).

Black Country MPs have been campaigning against the cash payments because it makes it hard to trace those who are selling stolen metal.

Mr Kelly said: "It's going to radically reduce criminality. We will see a reduction in metal thefts and in the small number of bad metal dealers prepared to launder metal for cash. What we now need is to keep up the pressure to ensure strict enforcement."

Beautiful body artwork

BEAUTY students at Halesowen College have been putting a new trend to the test with a body art competition.

The theatrical make-up students took part in the Magical Wildlife contest and Lydia Askins, a 16-year-old from Quarry Bank, won and received an overnight trip to London to attend the International Make-up Artist Trade Show. She is a former pupil of Thorns School.

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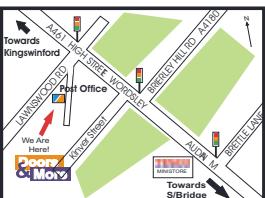
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Call to switch off traffic lights to prevent lengthy jam on busy road

TRAFFIC lights blamed for congestion on a road in Amblecote are unlikely to be axed due to the high cost of removing them.

Dudley Council announced that the signals at the junction of Amblecote High Street and Trefoil Gardens would be taken out following years of complaints from residents.

But despite the removal plan first being announced last April and receiving the backing of the community during a consultation, no work on the scheme has taken place.

Councillors have now revealed the reason was due to financial considerations as it would cost up to £100,000 to remove them. This would include digging up to remove electrical services, such as cables, which serve the lights.

But councillors for the town said this did not prevent the lights being left in place but simply switched off. They are now calling for this to be done to improve traffic flow along the road, a main route into Stourbridge town centre.

The lights were originally installed to help residents on The Spires estate access the main road more easily. But instead they have caused traffic congestion at peak times along a stretch of road which has three sets of traffic lights within a few hundred yards. Queues can build up along Stourbridge ring road back to Wordsley at busy times.

Councillor Pat Martin said: "This has been a really frustrating situation. We have been told the cost has prevented the removal of the lights. However, we say just turn them off. This will not require the costly removing of services."

Dudley Council's cabinet member for transportation, Councillor Patrick Harley, said he was willing to look at the matter again.

Mayor's thank you



Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Michael Evans and consort Sue Greenaway pictured with the Dudley Volunteer Awards winners at the council house in Priory Road

SOME of Dudley's best-loved volunteers were given a personal thank you for their hard work by the mayor.

Community-minded residents who last year scooped Dudley Volunteer Awards were invited by the mayor, Councillor Michael Evans, to an afternoon of tea and cakes last week.

A presentation was made to 17-year-old Laura McCutcheon, who was unable to make the original Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) ceremony in October. She was given the Young Volunteer of the Year award by the mayor and John Walters, from Dudley Lions, for her work with the Barnardo's Time For Me project. In addition to working as a retail assistant, Laura gives up two evenings a week, holiday time and weekends to provide activities for children whose parents are affected by alcohol and substance misuse.

Andy Gray, Dudley CVS chief officer said: "Young people like Laura are making a big difference every day."

Talk on ancestors

VISCOUNT Cobham, of Hagley Hall, near Stourbridge, will be talking to a local history society about his family and their ancestral home.

Lord Cobham's session with Belbroughton History Society will be at Belbroughton Church Hall on Wednesday, March 21, at 8pm and entrance will be £2.

For further details call Sarah Bradley on 01562 731025 or Sarah Snowden on 01562 730772.



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Living in the shadow of town's trash mountain



What a dump! Stef Matthews (left) with two-year-old Maddison and fellow resident Emma Clayton are sick of the sight of the waste mountain at the back of their Brierley Hill homes and want urgent action

IT HAS caused concern for several months and now this mountain of rubbish in the Black Country has grown so tall that it is towering over a nearby housing estate.

Residents in Brierley Hill are pleading with environment bosses to take action against the waste management firm which runs the site off Moor

Street. It is managed by Refuse Derived Fuel Ltd and is close to the Honeybourne estate built on the former Royal Brierley Crystal factory site.

Fuel

The firm shreds and dries solid waste, turning household rubbish and industrial refuse into fuel.

Residents say urgent action is needed to clean up the site.

Stef Andrews, aged 20, lives in Bagule Walk with her two-year-old daughter Maddie. She branded the lofty mountain of waste an "eyesore."

She said that dust and a stink came from the rubbish pile on warm days.

Fellow resident Emma Clayton, 21, added: "It's amazing that people live so close to it."

A representative of Refuse Derived Fuel Ltd declined to comment.

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A nailmaker in her Bromsgrove home from the early 1900s



Mary Millet, museum guide/demonstrator weighing a loaf of bread



Bessie Hawkes, museum guide/demonstrator toasting bread.



Bessie Hawkes, Black Country Living Museum guide/demonstrator stirring the mixture.

Grandma cooked clever to make the bostin' fittle which fed the family

Fiona Carding of The Black Country Living Museum looks at how grandma used to provide for the family

ONE THIRD of food produced worldwide is lost or wasted annually, Jose Graziano da Silva, the director general of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, told a gathering of ministers at the weekend.

This amounts to a staggering 1.3 billion metric tons of food each year!

Despite today's austere times the message "waste not, want not" has yet to impact upon the UK's throwaway society. If we cast our minds back one 100 years we discover how our grandmothers, together with some creative thinking, made a little go a long way.

In 1914 most families spent 60 per cent of

their income on food. By 1935 this had dropped to just 35 per cent. Today, despite our perception that food costs have actually risen, they now take up just 11 per cent of the average family's income.

Seasonality was the key to determining what went on the 1900s dinner table. Growing vegetables and keeping livestock was common in the Black Country and in 1910 some produce, such as grapes, oranges, bananas and dates, had started to become available through imports.

Clare Weston, Curator of Domestic and Cultural Life said: "Factory food production grew in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Palethorpes of Tipton were known nationally for their meat produce; especially their sausages. An

average worker at the factory earned just 6 shillings (30p) a week in the early 1920s."

Families would be creative with their recipes, making use of scraps. Gravy Pudding was a dish cooked commonly in the Black Country. Cheap and cheerful, it was a popular for Bonfire night, eaten with jacket potatoes that had been thrown into the fire.

Lindsey Butler, Team Leader, Domestic Life said: "Groats would be soaked in a bowl first. You would usually add about ½ lb groats to 1lb of meat.

The meat added would often be cheaper cuts of meat or scraps that a butcher would almost be giving away.

Leeks would be added with even the green part of the vegetable going in the pot to avoid waste. An onion and sometimes a potato would be added to help thicken it up.

Stock would be added and from 1910 Oxo cubes became available. Salt was bought in large blocks, often from families of travellers, and a small amount would be cut to add seasoning.

Four to five hours later you'd have an

inexpensive yet hearty meal that would keep you going for hours."

Other dishes included chitlings, pig's intestines, and tripe, stews, broths made from bone, grey peas and bacon, fish heads and parrot sauce.

Taking a leaf out of our grandmother's cookbook just goes to show that being frugal with our food doesn't have to mean going without, it just means cooking cleverly.

Recipe for Bread Pudding courtesy of 'Bostin' Fittle' by Pat Purcell

1 lb stale bread
8 oz grated suet
2 oz sugar
1 teaspoon mixed spice
6 oz dried fruit
1 egg

Soak the bread in water till soft. Squeeze to remove as much water as possible. Break up the bread with a fork, add the suet, sugar, spice and dried fruit and mix well. Stir in the beaten egg and put in a greased tin.

Bake in a moderate oven for 90 mins.

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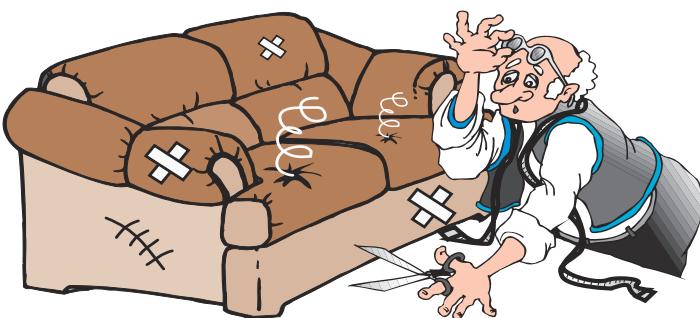
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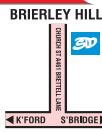
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Celebrating centre win



Councillors Tracy Wood and Qadar Zada are pictured celebrating success in retaining the Woodside Day Centre with some of the users

CAMPAIGNERS have won their fight to save a day centre in Dudley from the axe following a U-turn by council bosses.

Proposals to shut Woodside Day Centre, in Holly Hall, Dudley, were revealed last year by Dudley Council which said the building was in a "poor condition". They wanted to move its services to another base in

the area. But council leader, Councillor Les Jones, has admitted the centre would remain open following consultation with users, ward councillors and the community.

Ward councillors Qadar Zada and Tracy Wood who campaigned against the closure joined in celebrations today with people who use the centre.

Get in the picture

PHOTOGRAPHERS are being urged to get snapping ready to enter a calendar competition in aid of five Midland hospices. Webbs Garden Centres in West Hagley is launching its photo contest for the eighth year after it proved such a hit with customers.

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Burglary charges

A 40-year-old man from Sandwell has appeared in court charged with eight burglaries, including four at charity shops and two at churches.

Three of his alleged targets were in Stourbridge. Among alleged raids carried out by Jason Jones, of Hill Top, were: Age Concern, in Parkfield Road, Stourbridge; Cancer Research, in High Street, Halesowen; All Sew in Victoria Passage, Stourbridge; and Body Wise Health Club, at Mill Race Lane, Stourbridge.

Dudley magistrates adjourned the case until March 19 for committal to crown court.

A "HIGHLY organised" criminal ring from across the West Midlands has been smashed and a gang jailed for its part in the robbery of a lorry driver who died following an ambush.

Bogdan Bartczak's dead body was dragged on to park land off Vale Road, Dudley, after he collapsed when his lorry was being robbed.

Nine men were starting a total of more than 45 years behind bars after the 57-year-old was robbed for his cargo of £250,000 worth of TVs before he died of a suspected heart attack.

Just three of the 227 flat screen sets have been traced.

The Polish father Mr Bartczak had arrived in Dover on October 30, 2010, then drove to Oldbury, parking in Green Street. Seven of the men tried to steal the TVs at 9pm the following day but Mr Bartczak warned them off. He called his employers in Poland to tell someone had

targeted the lorry. Half an hour later the criminals returned intent on robbery, prosecutor Mr Michael Duck told Birmingham Crown Court.

Mr Bartczak suffered a bruised nose but no other injuries. Exactly what happened during the robbery - and how he ended up dumped on a roadside - may never be revealed as the defendants have kept silent. Some of the men arrested had faced kidnap charges but these were dropped.

Robbery

Seven were sentenced last week for their part in the robbery, while another two faced charges relating to other robberies and burglaries.

The defendants claimed they had originally intended to raid the lorry and it had ended up as a robbery. They all said Mr Bartczak's death was "unintended". All pleaded guilty to the charges.

Anthony Kennedy, aged 29, of Bourne Avenue, Tipton, was jailed for six-and-a-half years for robbery and 18 months for handling stolen goods. Phillip Harthill, 31, of Turner Street, West

Bromwich, got six and a half years for robbery and 18 months for burglary. Neino Scarrett, 23, of New Road, Dudley, was given a five-and-a-half years for robbery and 18 months for handling stolen goods. Daniel Knight, aged 28, of Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton, got five years and six months for robbery and 18 months for handling stolen goods.

Glen Garner, 24, of Beresford Crescent, West Bromwich, was jailed for five years for robbery and 18 months for burglary. A 17-year-old, who cannot be named, got two years youth detention for robbery and a 12-month training order for handling stolen goods, to run concurrently.

Robert Warren, 33, of Oak Leasow, Quinton, was jailed for two years for attempted theft and 12 months for assisting an offender. Craig Street, 48, of Bridges Crescent, Cannock, got 16 months for handling stolen goods. Martin Payne, 31, of Bleak House Road, Oldbury, got 18 months for the burglary of Air Liquide and two years seven months for burgling a house in Wolverhampton.

Morrisons' baby shop at Merry Hill

SUPERMARKET chain Morrisons has swooped to take over the former Best Buy store in Merry Hill, which will reopen as part of its new Kiddicare baby products chain, creating up to 70 jobs.

Morrisons has acquired 10 of the defunct electrical stores and aims to create 700 jobs nationwide as it expands Kiddicare, which is currently mostly an online operation.

It is understood that Best Buy's joint owner, Carphone Warehouse, has paid Morrisons to take over the leases of the stores, which it closed earlier this month after racking up big losses.

Kiddicare, which was bought by Morrisons in a £70 million deal last year, is now to invest around £15m in its new chain of stores.

Kiddicare chief executive Scott Weavers-Wright said: "These 10 flagships stores will put Kiddicare within easy driving distance of nearly a third of the UK population."

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Pupils' puppet show



Pupils Emily Paterson and Ryan Judd with puppets

CREATIVE youngsters at a Dudley school had fun with puppets as they welcomed visiting pupils for the day.

Pupils at St Mark's CE Primary in Pensnett were joined by students from St Nicholas CE Middle School in Pinnin, Worcestershire.

They used their artistic flair to make puppets and then wrote and performed plays. There were 83 pupils, from Year 5, aged nine and 10 taking part in the puppet sessions.

Children from St Mark's had visited St Nicholas last year where they took part in activities with a world peace theme.

Stephanie Williams, a teacher at St Mark's, said: "All the children enjoyed themselves. It's been good for the children to work with other pupils."

Car sped through red lights at 70mph

A CAR was driven through red traffic lights in the Black Country at speeds up to 70mph, swerving across roads and then going through a narrow gap on to a canal tow path with police in pursuit, a court heard.

One of the passengers, who fled when the vehicle crashed into a metal gate in Great Bridge, was Jason Campbell, aged 21, of Fisher Street, West Bromwich. Campbell admitted being carried in a vehicle taken without consent, which was driven dangerously in Birmingham New Road, Dudley. Magistrates adjourned sentencing until February 13.

Miss Maxine McIntosh, prosecuting, said the Vauxhall Corsa was taken from a driveway in Pedmore Road, Brierley Hill, in the early hours on January 16.

Police followed the vehicle after seeing it being driven erratically in Stourbridge Road, Dudley. The car, worth about £600, had been "written off".

Swimming lessons at centre

STOURBRIDGE'S Crystal Leisure Centre, Bell Street is offering 30-minute swimming sessions and tuition from qualified instructors for children aged four months to four years and their parents. Sessions run on Tuesdays 9.45am and 10.15am and Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2pm and 2.30pm.

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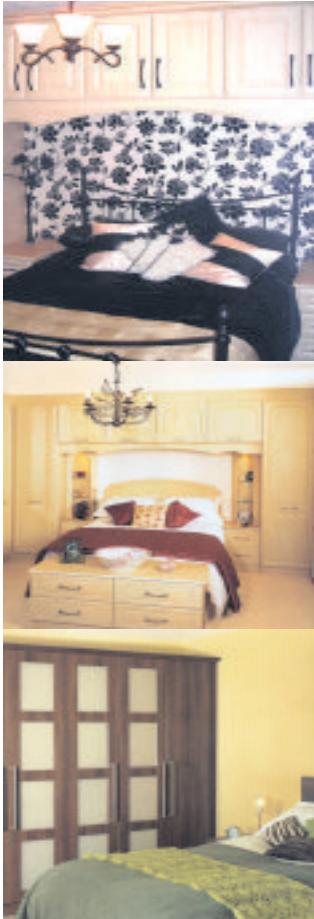
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thechronicle

Chief defends borough schools' league position

Results boost for college



EDUCATION bosses defended schools across Dudley after the borough slipped down the national rankings for both GCSE and A-levels.

It comes as the league tables show thousands of pupils in England are failing to get good GCSE results. However, Dudley remains the best performing local authority in the Black Country with Stourbridge schools leading the way.

GCSE results in the borough were on the up, with 58.5 per cent of pupils achieving five A* to C grades including English and maths. This compared to 56.4 per cent on the previous 12 months.

But the borough fell 16 places from 51 to 67 after being leapfrogged by other councils in other parts of the country.

Pupils did just as well in their A-levels compared to 2010, with an average points score of 741.7 for the second year running. Still the borough dropped down the national rankings, at 49 compared to 46 in 2010.

Cabinet member for children's services, Councillor Liz Walker, said there was "room for improvement".

She said: "These results are a tribute to the hard work of staff and pupils. However we will not be complacent. There is always room for improvement."

Dedicated

Pupils at Old Swinford Hospital School in Stourbridge helped it finish top of the pile in the borough for its GCSE results. A total of 93 per cent of pupils gained five A* to C grades including English and maths.

Headmaster Peter Jones said: "Old Swinford Hospital continues to demonstrate that it is one of Dudley's top-performing schools. Once again our hard working and dedicated students and teaching staff have been rewarded by achieving outstanding marks in the GCSE examinations."

Students at King Edward VI College in Stourbridge scored an average 1069.9 points, making it the top performer at A-level.

STAFF and pupils at Wordsley Business and Enterprise and Music College were celebrating after being named one of the top 200 improving schools in the country.

The school was honoured for its improved GCSE results after a total of 50 per cent of students at the school in Brierley Hill Road, Wordsley, got five A* to C grades including English and maths, up from 46 per cent last year.

Headteacher Mike Lambert said pupils had worked "incredibly hard" throughout the year. "I think that the key thing in the success has been our ability to raise expectations for the pupils here," he added.

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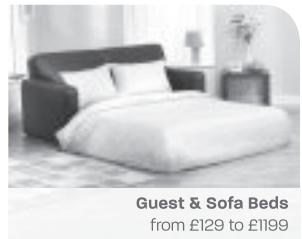
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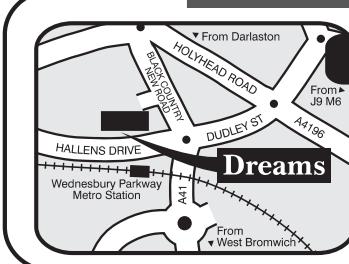


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CLUB NEWS

Challenge
to young
speakers

K'MINSTER SOROPTIMISTS

KIDDERMINSTER & District Soroptimists are calling for budding young public speakers to enter the 10th public speaking competition organised by Midland Arden Region Soroptimists.

Dudley Council Chambers, in Priory Road, Dudley, is the venue on Saturday, March 24.

An invitation has been extended to local schools to encourage students aged 14-18 to participate and be sponsored by the Kidderminster Soroptimists.

There is a prize of £150 for the overall winner plus a trophy for the school for one year. The second prize is £75 and the third is £25. Each participant will receive a certificate of achievement and a £25 book voucher from the sponsoring club.

The closing date is February 15 and details can be obtained from Stephanie Ainsley on 01562 632 889 or by email at sorop@gmail.com.

At the January meeting, Soroptimists heard from Home-Start Co-ordinator, Claire Howard on the work this charity does providing support and friendship to families in Wyre Forest.

Ninety volunteers have been welcomed into 178 families over the past year.

Members were delighted to hear that their donations had provided for a day out at Weston-Super-Mare in the summer and a Santa Safari at Christmas.

Club hands £400 to hospice team



Harold Foster, right, presents cheques for £400 to Simon Cater and Sally Woods, fundraisers for Compton Hospice, after his year as Probus president

PROBUS CLUB WEDNESFIELD

PROBUS Club of Wednesfield was pleased

to welcome Mr Simon Cater and Ms Sally Woods from Compton Hospice, Wolverhampton.

The president's charity for 2011 raised a total of £400, and the immediate past president, Harold Foster, and Probus members had great pleasure in presenting the cheques to Simon and Sally at the club's January meeting.

Best wishes were expressed for their future fundraising and for the hospice.

Simon and Sally spoke of the work at Compton Hospice, and the help they can give patients, carers and relatives.

A further presentation was made to Arthur Windsor to show the Probus club's appreciation for more than 22 years in office as treasurer.

Annual sub raised to £25

THE annual subscription will be raised to £25, due in February, and the monthly attendance fee to £1.30 from March.

The arts and crafts group

will meet on the 3rd Monday of the month from 2pm-4pm.

There was discussion on how, this year, to celebrate the annual dinner - or should it be an outing? A vote on this will take place at

WOLLASTON 'E' TWG

the next meeting. The minutes secretary has announced her retirement and a replacement must be found, also a new committee member, both to be settled at the AGM in March.

Proceeds from the Cobden Street Church carols have been sent to children's charity "Little Hearts Matter".

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Firefighters rescue pony from drowning in mud

FIREFIGHTERS battled for two hours to rescue a horse which had fallen into a canal culvert in Pensnett.

The three-year-old distressed animal was stuck in the mud in the culvert in part of the Stourbridge canal near Pens Pool nature reserve, Pensnett.

Its head was just above water when it was spotted by a dog walker at around 8.30am on Monday, January 23.

Firefighters, who captured the rescue on their own camera, donned specialist suits to lower themselves into the water and silt alongside the animal.

Wrapped

They wrapped the fire engine's main delivery water hose underneath the pony to slowly ease it onto the bank. They used salvage sheets to lever the pony up so it could be checked over by a member of Equine Emergency Services.

Watch commander David Foley, of Brierley Hill fire station, said the animal was distressed and exhausted.

Around 12 firefighters worked on the rescue and watch commander Foley said it was a team effort.

"It was rewarding to work on this rescue," he said. "It was a bit out of the ordinary but this was our third rescue of this type in two years and we were glad it was successful."

The pony was taken a rescue centre to be assessed, cleaned up and cared for.

Talk about vase

WORDSLY History Society will host a talk by Graham Fisher, a member of the British Glass Foundation, who will look at the re-creation of the famous Portland Vase at the Ruskin Glass Centre. The talk will be held at the community centre, Wordsley Green on February 9 at 7.30pm. Entry £2.



The fire crew who rescued the pony Picture: West Midland Fire Service



The rescue in progress as the pony is saved from the muddy water

Events Calendar:

- 1 MAR: THE WANTED at LG ARENA
- 14 - 18 MAR: Disney On Ice Princes & Heroes at THE NIA
- 17 MAR: JLS at LG ARENA
- 22 MAR: THE DRASTIC at THE NIA
- 31 MAR: JOE BONAMASSA at THE NIA
- 7 APR: DIVERSITY at LG ARENA
- 11 MAY: JERRY SEINFELD at THE NIA
- 17 MAY: BARRY MANILOW at LG ARENA
- 8 JUN: SOCCER ANYDAY LIVE WITH STEPHEN STYLING AND FIVE SPORTS PRESENTERS at THE NIA
- 15 JUN: ELTON JOHN at LG ARENA
- 4 - 8 SEP: MRS BROWN RIDES AGAIN at THE NIA
- 10 NOV: ANDREA BOCELLI at LG ARENA
- 14, 15, 17 - 22 SEP: MICHAEL MCINTYRE at THE NIA
- 11 - 13 OCT: JOHN BISHOP at THE NIA
- 29 MAR - 1 APR: THE NATIONAL HOMEBUILDING & RENOVATING SHOW NEC, BIRMINGHAM at THE NEC
- 8 - 11 MAR: CRUFTS at THE NEC
- 22 - 25 MAR: HOBBY CRAFTS at THE NEC
- 6 DEC: PETER ANDRE at THE NIA
- 29 MAR - 1 APR: THE NATIONAL HOMEBUILDING & RENOVATING SHOW NEC, BIRMINGHAM at THE NEC
- 8 - 11 MAR: CRUFTS at THE NEC
- 22 - 25 MAR: HOBBY CRAFTS at THE NEC

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FB Consumer Protection Association

FOUR ponies rescued from Fens Pool Nature Reserve, Pensnett are being nursed back to health at a specialist sanctuary.

The horses, named Tinsel, Robin, Mistletoe and Holly, were found extremely underweight. Three of the animals – Robin, a Welsh pony, Mistle-

Pub steps in to help walkers

A PUB landlord will let ramblers and dog walkers use his car park for free after charges at a nearby country park increased by a massive 78 per cent.

The price hike being introduced at Baggeridge Country Park, near Sedgley, has left walkers furious and sparked fears for the future of a tea shop at the beauty spot.

But owner of the nearby Summer House pub John Coombes said visitors to the beauty spot could use his 80-space car park free in the winter months.

He insisted they did not have to use

the pub in Gospel End Road if going to Baggeridge Country Park.

South Staffordshire Council has put up the cost of a day's parking at the popular nature area from £1.40 to £2.50.

An hour's parking rate has been introduced, costing £1.50.

Meanwhile, at nearby Himley Hall parking is 90p for two hours or £1.30 all day.

Threatened

Visitors have threatened to boycott the country park, while Dave Daly, aged 41, and his wife, Julie, 42, who run the Baggeridge Tea Shop, are

worried about the future of their business as a result of the charge hike.

Mr Coombes, 57, said: "It is a complete rip-off and we are quite happy to let people use our car park during the winter."

"Hopefully that will help them make the council realise that people are not willing to pay these prices."

"I know Dave and Julie, they're a great couple and they don't deserve this."

"It's difficult enough for businesses at the moment so we need to help each other out when we can."

The council blamed the hikes on "tough times".

Purse-snatcher is chased down by a passing runner

TWO drug addicts who robbed a vulnerable 81-year-old woman as she walked along a Stourbridge street have been locked up.

The woman was in The Broadway when Dean Huxley and Tara North approached her, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The pensioner was pushed off balance as her purse containing just £5 and some change was snatched. Just weeks later, Huxley stole a purse from an 85-year-old woman in Union Street, Stourbridge.

Police blitz on vehicles with tinted windows

MORE than 130 motorists have been caught driving cars with illegal tinted windows during a four-month crackdown carried out by police in Halesowen.

Officers from the town's police station have been stopping drivers following complaints by residents about motorists who are flouting the law.

Sgt Martin Hall, from Halesowen Police, said cars with tinted windows can be linked to crime and anti-social behaviour and often cause concern.

The law says 75 per cent of light should be able to get through the front windscreen and 70 per cent of light through the front side windows. The rules on tinted windows don't apply to the rear windscreen or the rear passenger windows. Police use light-measuring equipment to gauge tints.

Sgt Hall said more than 130 drivers had been stopped and had volunteered to remove their tinted windows.

"This is as a result of complaints from our local communities... regarding a perceived fall in driving standards locally and the blatant flouting of basic traffic laws involving the use of mobile phones, speeding and more laterally, heavily tinted windows."

The court heard he laughed as he ran away but the woman called for help and a passing runner chased after 37-year-old Huxley and held him until police arrived.

Judge Martin Walsh branded the crimes "utterly mean and despicable".

Afraid

In a victim impact statement, the 81-year-old said she felt utterly distressed after the purse snatching, her confidence had suffered and she was now afraid to leave her home.

Huxley, of New Street, Dudley, admitted robbery and theft and was jailed for three years.

North, 20, of Stickley Lane, Lower Gornal, pleaded guilty to robbery and was given two years in custody.

The offences were carried out to fuel their drug addiction and the two women were seen as "easy victims", Judge Walsh said.

Mr David Lees, prosecuting, said North had 47 previous offences and Huxley 39.

Miss Samantha Powis, defending North, said she needed help to deal with her drug problem.

Mr Malcolm Fowler, for Huxley, said he had been "desperate" for drugs.

Get in the swim

YOUNGSTERS can splash out with an intensive beginners' swimming course at Dudley Leisure Centre.

The centre is running a five-day course from February 13 for beginners aged five and over. The sessions introduce children to water in a fun and relaxed way. Call the centre on 01384 812800.

Charity challenge



Rebecca Franks, Amelia Stubbs, Hayley Moss and Leyla Palmer with Claire Cresswell, front, launching the appeal to find a charity for Olympic year

STUDENTS and staff at The Kingswinford School are on the hunt for a charity to support during a series of fundraising events to mark the Olympics.

They are organising sponsored activities to celebrate London 2012 and want to support a good cause.

As well as the sponsored events, students at the Water Street school will take part in a week of Olympic

style team building activities. The school hopes to raise at least £2,500 and teacher Rebecca Franks wants local charities to bid for the money.

"These bids will be shown to our students who will ultimately decide which charity we will sponsor," she said.

Interested charities should contact Mrs B Hedley at the school.

Ponies are nursed back to health

FOUR ponies rescued from Fens Pool Nature Reserve, Pensnett are being nursed back to health at a specialist sanctuary.

The horses, named Tinsel, Robin, Mistletoe and Holly, were found extremely underweight. Three of the animals – Robin, a Welsh pony, Mistle-

toe, a tiny Shetland, and Tinsel, a cob, were in the weakest state and were barely able to stand by themselves.

Malnourished

But all four horses are now facing a brighter future thanks to the efforts of staff at Redwings Horse Sanctuary.

They were taken in just before Christmas.

Tinsel needed the most care as he was severely malnourished.

Senior vet Nicolas de Brauwere, at Redwings, said: "Tinsel really does prove there are very few rescue cases that can't recover."

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thechronicle

No integrity is left in businesses now

IN RECENT letters, Mr D Bodley and Mr Phillip Bowen seem to have experienced dissatisfaction with their insurers.

We have to accept the word "integrity" is no longer featured in the business dictionary. It has been replaced by the word "negotiation".

The coin a phrase "get rid of integrity" and the rest is a piece of cake" has been adopted by many institutions and they are willing to extract out of us, as much of our "hard-earned" as they can. This is difficult for people of a certain age, including myself, to understand, but we have to adapt to current market prac-

tices. Firstly, if we receive a premium increase which we think is excessive, we do not need to contact the issuing company asking why there has been an increase.

It is of no interest to us so we have to do our homework and formulate a cunning plan of our own before making contact.

We then scan the comparison sites on the internet to discover if the increase is justifiable. If you do not have access to a computer you probably know someone who does.

We then negotiate with our existing company to try and reduce their

premium to an amount which corresponds to the lowest quote on the comparison site.

Because companies need to maintain their critical mass, they will do anything reasonable to retain their existing customers.

This not only applies to insurers, but also to utility companies, telephone companies and largely anyone you do business with on a regular basis.

People will be amazed at the deals available with a recession in full swing.

ROY SLIMM
Church Road
Dudley

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Stourbridge Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial, 51-53
Queen Street, Wolverhampton
WV1 1ES

E-MAIL
stourbridgechronicle@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Who is qualified to diagnose back pain?

AS A LONG-term sufferer of lower back pain (my "facet joints" have crumbled), I feel very strongly about people who are "harassed" about this condition. At 72, I am retired and have no fears from the "snops", but please, please can I put forward my views on this?

Are the "snops" who follow "back pain claimants" legally or medically trained? If they are "legals" then they will eventually feel their own back problems caused by carrying heavy briefcases. My own condition means I cannot stand for long periods. Neither can I lift weighty objects unless I am prepared to suffer the consequences.

Most of the time when out walking with my wife, our pace is regulated by me - with my stick. But, she occasionally has to ask me to slow down. The "medics" can possibly explain this, but the "legals" would have no idea. Other than if I was claiming benefits, they would get them stopped and sue me. Me? This morning is painful, and I will be hoping that painkillers work.

PETER COLE
Kingswinford

Power of the sun can bring in money

OWNERS of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems need have no fear.

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Pioneering ID scheme is launched by metal firm



Customer Daniel Jones with his membership card for doing business at Mason Metals in Brierley Hill

A BLACK Country metal recycling business has voluntarily introduced its own customer ID scheme – before the Government launches its own legal measures to tighten rules regarding scrap.

Mason Metals Ltd in Two Woods Lane, Brierley Hill, launched it last month in response to concerns about metal thefts.

Commercial manager Neil Woodall said it had been set up with the full backing on West Midlands Police.

The Government last week announced plans to stop the metal theft epidemic by banning cash payments.

Since the start of this year each Mason customer has to fill in a questionnaire and have given proof of identity before

they are issued with a members' card and number. "This provides the robust paper trail currently being sought by the police, MPs and utilities companies," said Mr Woodall. The card is in addition to the usual waste transfer and duty of care note that will still be completed by Mason Metals with every transaction under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act.

"Any customer is welcome to enrol. We have many house-

holders who regularly recycle items such as aluminium cans. The scheme is aimed at all repeat clients," explained Mr Woodall. He added that the business could deal with as many as 150 transactions a day and up to 1,000 a week.

"If the law does change to a cashless system the scheme will also be an ideal pre-cursor to any new system that we would implement," added Mr Woodall.

Mason was started in 1960 and currently employs 23 full-time staff at Brierley Hill.



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Still time to catch up with the training

THIS is the fourth week of the training programme in preparation for the Action Heart 5 mile run on Sunday, February 26.

For those who have already entered and have been taking part in the training programme don't worry if other commitments have prevented you from going out there is still plenty of time to catch up with the training schedule.

There is an entry form appearing again this week – if you have not already entered then you are advised to do so without any further delay as Action Heart tell us that the race is starting to fill-up.

In return for your entry form you will receive your official race number and information on the event. In view of the involvement of adidas UK, Action Heart is offering incentives for sponsorship collected, ie runners raising £50 plus will be entitled to receive an adidas sweatshirt and those reaching £100 plus will get a pair of adidas trainers.

Training Schedule Week 4

Monday: Rest	Friday: 2 mile jog
Tuesday: 2 mile jog	Saturday: Rest
Wednesday: 1.5 mile run	Sunday: 3 mile jog/walk
Thursday: Rest	



Action Heart's Melissa Lowke, a Wolverhampton & Bilston club member, gets ready for the run along with Action Heart volunteer Brian Fletcher

ACTION HEART 5 'HEART RUN' ENTRY FORM

Name.....
Address.....
.....
Est. finish time.....
Runner or walker.....
Date of birth.....
Age on day.....
Club (if any).....
Sex (M/F).....
Telephone No.
Email Address

I am an amateur as defined by the UKA.
I agree to abide by the current laws and rules of competition of the UKA. I will be 15 or over on the day of the event.

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Date.....



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Fairytale journey through those classic moments



HOW TO ENTER

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Thursday, February 9
Usual rules apply.
Editor's decision is final.

the nec group birmingham



moments in Disney history. Hosted by Tinkerbell, the ice spectacular will see eight Disney princesses see their wishes come true with help from their devoted princes.

You will get to watch Ariel's dreams be unlocked from under the sea and Prince Philip defeat evil forces in a race against time to rescue Sleeping Beauty's Aurora.

Rapunzel will fulfil her dream of escaping the tower and see the floating lights; while Tiana celebrates her ambitions of owning a restaurant down in New Orleans.

Ambitions

Jasmine will tell her classic story as she discovers a whole new world with Aladdin and Snow White finds her one true love.

If that wasn't enough already, Tinkerbell will also help to reveal Cinderella and Belle's deepest wishes.

To find out more about Disney On Ice Princesses & Heroes visit www.thenia.co.uk

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Work to start on zoo link with canal and museum

A LONG-AWAITED link road connecting three of the Black Country's biggest tourist attractions will be completed by the end of the year.

Plans to link Dudley Zoo, the Black Country Living Museum and the Dudley Canal Trust as part of a £10 million project have been in the pipeline since 2006.

Dudley's regeneration boss Angus Adams said the road will "definitely" be open to the public by December of this year.

Work is due to start in forthcoming weeks on part of the site after construction of the new Dudley and Sandwell archives centre next door to the museum begins later in February.

The project also includes a new joint entrance and visitor centre for the attractions so people can pay to access all the sites together.

A new road will also run between the museum and zoo, while a car park with up to 1,000 spaces will cater for all the sites.

The road will run from near the former

Trading Post premises in Castle Hill to the back of the museum in nearby Tipton Road. It will also provide access to Dudley Canal Trust at the back of the museum.

European

The plans became a reality when a bid for £4.5m of European funding was approved last year.

Councillor Adams said this week: "It will definitely be finished and open for the public by the end of the year."

"It is great news for the town."

"Work is moving forward and though we do not have a definite start date, the other parts of the project such as the archives are progressing well."

The plans have been previously held back by a lack of funding and nearby roadworks caused by the reconfiguring of the Burnt Tree junction and the construction of the new Tesco supermarket.

Restoration work will get under way in May at the zoo.

In cider trading, and all that Jas



Jas Bains at his shop in Netherton which is shortlisted for an award in the Cider Retailer of the Year contest

TRADITIONAL friendly service and a wide selection of drinks have put a Netherton shop in the running for the Independent Cider Retailer of the Year award.

Bains Wines has been shortlisted for the national prize on February 7, after impressing judges with its offering of more than 60 ciders.

The shop, run by Jas Bains, aged 35, has been in business in Halesowen Road since 1986. Last year Mr Bains moved to bigger premises in the same street.

"I have never entered a competition but I thought this time as the shop was bigger it was worth a shot. I was surprised and delighted when they told me I had been shortlisted," he said.

Steel company set to reduce stocks in town

INDIA'S Essar Steel is reducing stocks at its facility in Dudley, ahead of the end of the financial year.

The company says it will restock at the Pensnett Road site once market demand improves.

"Essar is committed to the UK steel market, which it sees as having a lot of potential in the long-term, and is committed to the business and employees at Dudley," said spokesman Andrew Turpin.

"New products and stocks will be brought in due course and as market demand improves."

Weak market conditions have pushed some steel producers in Britain and western Europe to shut down operations. Essar UK has processed steel at a 300,000 tons a year rate in the last few months and has the capacity of 500,000 tons.

£1.1m car cloning gang are given prison terms

A criminal gang that sold stolen luxury cars in a £1.1 million con have been handed prison sentences totalling 32 years. Forged paperwork was used to sell 45 vehicles stolen in burglaries around the Midlands.

The scam prompted a two-year-long investigation by three forces including Staffordshire Police.

Cloned number plates and chassis were added to cars such as Mercedes, BMWs and Audis. The crime only came to light when unwitting new owners tried to register the cars with the DVLA.

The car cloning ring netted profits of £400,000 in two years. Seven men pleaded guilty at Birmingham Crown Court to conspiracy to conceal, disguise or convert criminal property.

Brothers James and John Sheen and Philip and Robert Blair were all jailed.

Mark Allman, Edward Pines, Christopher Edwards and Paul Candelent were also sentenced.

Brother

James Sheen, aged 27, and brother John, 23, both of Shinfield, Reading, were both jailed for eight years.

Philip Blair, aged 32, of Catshill Road, Brown-

hills, was jailed for five years and six months while brother Robert, aged 23, of Parkside Road, Halesowen, was sentenced to five years and two months.

Christopher Edwards, aged 25, of Vernon Avenue, in Brownhills, was given two years and nine months.

Paul Candelent, aged 31, of Rainscar, Tamworth, was jailed for two years and six months, while Edward Pines, aged 46, of Marsh Farm, Luton, received a one-year suspended sentence.

Skip lorry driver Mark Allman, aged 47, formerly of Bolton Way, Bloxwich, got a one-year suspended sentence for money laundering.

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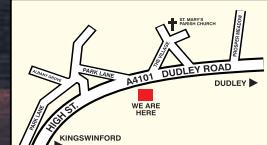
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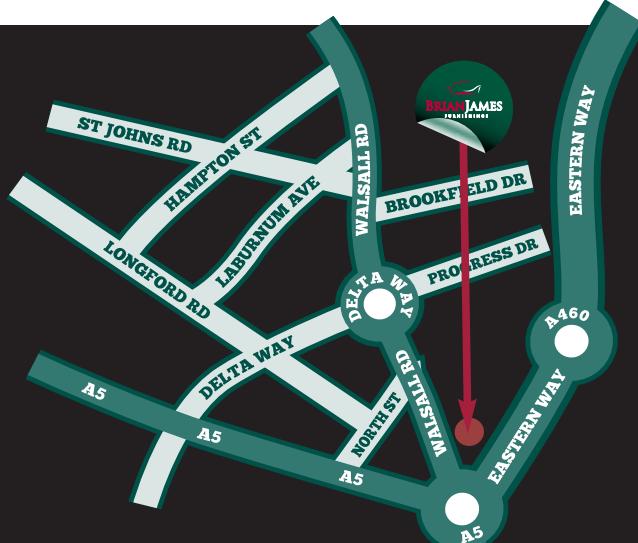
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Go Red for Heart in February

Turn heads, warm hearts and wear red on the 24th February for the British Heart Foundation's (BHF) National Wear Red Day.

Heart disease kills three times more women than breast cancer but by turning red, you can help the BHF to reduce this number. As part of National Heart Month the nation's heart charity is calling on the UK to brush down their red dresses, shake out their red locks or even unlock their most precious Louboutins to help raise valuable money for its fight against heart disease.

A famous fashion designer once said, "When in doubt, wear red" and that's exactly what the BHF is encouraging you to do. It can be a touch of red for those who want to be more alluring or it could be a full blown outfit dedicated to the 'emotionally-intense' colour. With a suggested donation of just £1, women, men and children around the country will make a big difference in beating the UK's biggest killer on National Wear Red Day.

It's also a leap year this year which means there is an extra day which you can use to help the nation's hearts. The bonus day could be used for a Wear Red Day if you can't fit it in on the 24th but, if red isn't your thing, there are other ways of getting involved and sharing the love.

You can pen the person you love a **Love Note** for a suggested donation of £1 and have it posted in one of BHF's shop windows for all to see! What's more, any women thinking of taking advantage of the leap year can use the heart-shaped notes as the perfect way to pop the question.

Or buy your loved one a gift such as a Sweetheart Hot Water Bottle or Heart Cufflinks – there is a whole array of heart-warming gifts at BHF's online shop. <http://giftshop.bhf.org.uk/>

To find out more and to order your free Red for Heart Fundraising Kit today - visit bhf.org.uk/red or call 0300 330 0645

For more information about the BHF please contact Jemma Mahon on email mahonj@bhf.org.uk or call 020 7554 0171 or 07764 290 381 (out of hours)

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Meet your Doom or learn how to Quarrel

RETRO gamers will delight in the return of trend-setting shooter Doom to Xbox Live Arcade.

The 20-year-old shoot-'em-up looks and sounds its age – it's tiny hard rock soundtrack has become legend – but that's part of its charm for nostalgic gamers, alongside the chance to lay waste to hordes of monsters via an arsenal of hefty weapons.

Take it online for a fast and furious match or team up with a friend. It costs 400 Microsoft points.

Those more into brain than brawn should check out Quarrel, an addictive new game on XBLA which combines Scrabble-like wordplay with strategy.

Challenge contestants and win their territory with higher scoring words. Cute animation and sound effects add to the fun, and it will even adopt your avatar. You can take on real world opponents online. 400 Microsoft points.

Leon Burakowski

Guitarist's gig

FORMER Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett is at Bilton's Robin 2 venue on Saturday, February 25, as part of his Breaking Waves tour in support of his current album Beyond The Shrouded Horizon and single Til These Eyes. Call (01902) 401211 for tickets.

Leon Burakowski

Musical blockbusters to banish the winter blues

THE feel-good factor will be high at two of the West Midlands' major theatres this month with the arrival of a pair of hit musicals, Sister Act and South Pacific.

None (or, indeed, nun) can deny the wide appeal of Whoopi Goldberg's Sister Act, which played to more than a million people during its run at the London Palladium, and is still a big success on Broadway.

The soulful musical about a disco diva who takes refuge in a convent after witnessing a gangland slaying features a score by multi-Oscar winning songwriter Alan Menken, the man behind Disney's best recent movie music. The story has been written by part of the team behind classic TV sitcom Cheers.

Hairdresser on the run Deloris is played by rising star Cynthia Erivo and former Coronation Street actress Denise Black plays the Mother Superior who she clashes with. Another soap star, Michael Starke, who was loveable rogue Sinbad in Brookside, will be taking holy orders to portray the Monsignor.

Sister Act opens at the Grand on Tuesday, February 7, and runs until Saturday, February 8.



Samantha Womack as Nellie Forbush in South Pacific, which will be arriving at the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham next week

There will be some enchanted evenings at Birmingham's New Alexandra from February 7 to 18 when Rodgers and Hammerstein classic South Pacific arrives after a run at London's Barbican Theatre.

Former Game On and EastEnders actress Samantha Womack will play nurse Nellie Forbush, who falls in love with a French planter, while she is serving at a US Navy base on a Polynesian island under threat of attack by Imperial Japan.

Tickets cost £9 (concessions available). Call (01902) 321321. Former Phantom

Matthew Cammelle will play the Frenchman and Broadway star Loretta Ables Sayre will play the formidable 'Bloody' Mary.

The hit songs include Happy Talk, Younger Than Springtime, Bali Ha'i, I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair and, of course, There Is Nothin' Like A Dame.

It's a kind of magic ovation

One Night of Queen, Wolverhampton Grand
GARRY Mullen brought legendary Queen frontman Freddie Mercury back to life in a two-hour energy-filled One Night of Queen concert that had the audience dancing in the aisles.

A packed Grand showed their appreciation with cheers and whistles for every song.

Backed by a crack four-piece band, Mullen had an uncanny ability to connect with the audience like he's the real deal.

His voice was hampered at times by a cold but the sweat poured from him as he postured and camped it in true Mercury style. The audience gave him a standing ovation.

The entire show is summed up in the title of one of the songs, It's A Kind Of Magic.

Les Jowett

Yin and yang in perfect harmony

Chinese State Circus, Wolverhampton Civic Hall
THE talented Chinese State Circus gave their all with their Yin Yang performance at the Civic Hall in Wolverhampton, it was just a shame that there weren't a lot more people there to see it.

But those few hundred who did witness the wonderful spectacle were suitably enthusiastic and, apart from a few slip-ups, particularly in the skipping rope section, everything was very impressive.

The entertainment included human juggling, the Chinese poles, the legendary bicycle act where 12 acrobats manoeuvre on a single bicycle, foot juggling with drums and the hoop divers. Another slight slip-up there but the performer got a huge cheer when on his second attempt he got it right. It makes you wonder if this is actually staged to happen.

Formidable

All this action is teamed with a captivating and atmospheric all-girl group of live musicians.

This was the UK premiere of Yin Yang , part of a 37-date theatre tour that takes them the length and breadth of the UK promoting a performance from the formidable Shaolin Warrior, known only as The One. People watched in awe lay on a bed of nails while a concrete slab was broken on his chest. Ouch!

The show – as in the meaning of yin yang, two complementary forces in the universe, masculine and feminine – showcased the different skills of the different sexes and how well they worked together.

Nowhere was this better seen than in the 'ballet' section where the girl stood on her tiptoes on the man's head as he turned around on stage.

Sue Attwater

New Smiley is Oscar worthy

SIR Alec Guinness is a hard act to follow but Gary Oldman succeeds him as spycatcher George Smiley with such sombre grace that his Oscar nomination seems justified for **Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy** (15).

Smiley is brought out of retirement to hunt a double agent at the heart of the British establishment in John le Carré's Cold War novel, previously a 1979 BBC TV series with the actor knight.

Now film director Tomas Alfredson has faithfully recreated the 1970s atmosphere in his version. This tense cerebral chess game between East and West benefits from excellent performances, not only from Oldman, but Sherlock star Benedict Cumberbatch as his young assistant, and chief suspect Toby Young and Colin Firth.

Tinker Tailor is now available on DVD, Blu-ray and for download.

Leon Burakowski

Fancy fret work

Rodrigo y Gabriela and Cuba - Area 52

THE Mexican guitar duo add to their frenetic fancy fret work – as much influenced by heavy metal as flamenco – with the brass and percussion of a 13-piece Hispanic big band on their latest album.

Anoushka Shankar lends her sitar to one track, as one of several guests. Despite passion, there is a tendency towards pleasant nodding jazz rock.

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the pulse

Saturday TV

Choice



MRS BROWN'S BOYS

BBC1, 9.30pm

In mid-January, Mrs Brown's Boys was tenth highest rated BBC One show of the week, with more than six million viewers tuning in – that doesn't include all the extra viewers who caught it on iPlayer. Does it deserve such high viewing figures? Well, that's open to question, but if the sight of latterday Old Mother Riley Brendan O'Carroll in drag tickles your funnybone, then you won't want to miss this final helping in which Agnes tries to make friends with Dermot's mother-in-law Hillary ahead of the baby's birth. She suggests they go out to dinner together, but the evening comes to an abrupt end for the two feuding matriarchs.

BBC1

- 6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.35 Rachel Allen: Home Cooking. (R) 12.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.
- 12.15 Football Focus. 1.00 World Olympic Dreams. Mongolian boxer Badar Uugan Enkhbatyn's preparations for London. 1.30 Live Six Nations: Rugby Union. France v Italy (Kick-off 2.30pm).
- 4.30 Live Six Nations: Rugby Union. Scotland v England (Kick-off 5.00pm).
- 6.55 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.
- 7.15 **The Magicians**. With John Torode, Gregg Wallace, Arlene Phillips and Phil Tufnell.
- 8.30 **The National Lottery Saturday Night Draws**. The Overtones join OJ Borg as the winning numbers are revealed.
- 8.40 **Casualty**. Linda struggles to take care of her sister's two children, and Lloyd tries to piece together the series of events that led to a woman with Alzheimer's disease being admitted.
- 9.30 **Mrs Brown's Boys**. Agnes tries to make friends with Dermot's mother-in-law Hillary, but the pair's dinner date comes to an abrupt end when Maria suddenly goes into labour. Last in the series.
- 10.00 BBC News; Weather.
- 10.20 **Match of the Day**. Including highlights of Manchester City v Fulham; National Lottery Update.
- 11.40 **The Football League Show**. Highlights of today's games.
- 1.00 Weatherview. 1.05 BBC News.

BBC2

- 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 12.00 Coast. 12.15 Film: Miracle. (2004) Fact-based sporting drama, starring Kurt Russell. 2.20 Film: Flower Drum Song. (1961) Romantic musical comedy, with Miyoshi Umeki and James Shigeta. 4.30 Final Score. 5.30 Escape to the Country. (R)
- 6.30 **Flog It!** Philip Serrell and David Fletcher visit Torquay, where they value antiques including an amber necklace, an Austrian bronze figure and a cheese coaster.
- 7.30 **Dad's Army**. The platoon defends headquarters against members of the Highland Regiment. (R)
- 8.00 **Versailles: The Dream of a King**. Docu-drama re-creating the life and loves of Louis XIV. (R)
- 9.00 **FILM: Brighton Rock**. (2010) Premiere. A criminal in the 1960s tries to seduce a waitress who can connect him to a murder, determined to ensure her silence. Drama, starring Sam Riley and Andrea Riseborough.
- 10.45 **Pan Am**. The Clipper Majestic is sent to the Soviet Union on a diplomatic mission.
- 11.25 **TOTP2: The 60s**. Performances by Clodagh Rodgers, the Move, Tom Jones and the Bee Gees.
- 11.55 **FILM: The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada**. (2005) Modern-day Western, starring Tommy Lee Jones.
- 1.50 Film: Paper Clips. (2004) Documentary about a school's commemoration of the Holocaust.

ITV1

- 6.00 CITV: Mini CITY. 7.25 CITY. 9.25 ITV News. 9.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. 10.25 May the Best House Win. (R) 11.25 This Morning: Saturday. 12.30 Murder, She Wrote. (R) 1.30 ITV News; Weather. 1.40 Film: Evil Under the Sun. (1982) Mystery, starring Peter Ustinov. 3.55 Film: Wild Wild West. (1999) Sci-fi Western comedy, starring Will Smith. 5.45 Regional News; Weather.
- 6.00 **ITV News; Weather**.
- 6.15 **New You've Been Framed - Top 100 Kids!** Comedian Harry Hill narrates a selection of viewer-submitted comical clips devoted to youngsters, including messy eaters, troublesome teens and sibling rivalries.
- 7.15 **Harry Hill's TV Burp**. New series. Comic review of the week's small-screen highlights.
- 7.45 **Take Me Out**. A charity campaigner, a semi-professional footballer, a musician and a model try to impress 30 single women, and last week's couples go on their dates.
- 9.00 **The Jonathan Ross Show**. With David Beckham, Keira Knightley and Kevin Bridges.
- 10.00 **The Talent Show Story**. Life on the judging panel. Last in the series.
- 11.00 **ITV News; Weather**.
- 11.15 **FILM: Music and Lyrics**. (2007) Comedy, starring Hugh Grant and Drew Barrymore.
- 1.10 **The Zone**; ITV News Headlines. 3.30 In Plain Sight. 4.15 ITV Nightscreen. 5.30 ITV Morning News.

Channel 4

- 6.00 **The Treacle People**. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Volleyball. (R) 7.55 The Morning Line. 8.50 T4: Everyone's Talking About – Top Ten. 9.20 T4: A-Z of Star Wars Episode I: T4 Movie Special. 9.55 T4: New Girl. (R) 10.25 T4: New Girl. (R) 10.55 T4: Playing It Straight. 11.55 T4: The Simpsons. (R) 12.25 T4: New Girl. (R) 12.55 T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) 1.55 Channel 4 Racing. 3.55 Come Dine with Me. (R) 4.25 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.00 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.35 Come Dine with Me. (R)
- 6.05 **Come Dine with Me**. January Jones-Omatajo prepares a soul-food-inspired menu. (R)
- 6.35 **Channel 4 News**.
- 7.05 **4thought.tv**. A Sikh charity worker explains his view of altruism.
- 7.10 **FILM: My Super Ex-Girlfriend**. (2006) An insecure superhero is outraged when her boyfriend dumps her, and in revenge uses her powers to ruin his life. Fantasy comedy, starring Uma Thurman, Luke Wilson and Eddie Izzard.
- 9.00 **The Million Pound Drop Live**. Davina McCall presents the quiz show in which contestants can win £1million, but lose money for giving incorrect answers.
- 10.30 **FILM: The Full Monty**. (1997) Comedy, starring Robert Carlyle.
- 12.20 Film: If. (1968) Drama, with Malcolm McDowell. 2.15 The Silent City. (R) 2.25 This Is Joe. (R) 2.30 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 3.15 My Dream Farm. (R) 4.10 Time Team. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 Sali Mai. (R)

Channel 5

- 6.00 Milkshake! 10.00 Meerkat Manor. (R) 10.30 Benidorm ER. (R) 11.30 Royal Navy Caribbean Patrol. (R) 12.25 Film: Riding Shotgun. (1954) Western, starring Randolph Scott. 2.00 Film: Apache Drums. (1951) Western, starring Stephen McNally. 3.30 Film: Death of a Gunfighter. (1969) Western, starring Richard Widmark. 5.25 Film: Private Benjamin. (1980) Comedy, starring Goldie Hawn.
- 7.25 **5 News Weekend**.
- 7.35 **NCIS**. Having identified the mole in their ranks, the detectives are forced to rely on information from questionable sources as they try to prevent a criminal stealing government secrets. (R)
- 8.30 **NCIS**. A petty officer is killed in what at first seems to be a road-rage incident – until the team discover he belonged to an underground fight club. Crime drama, starring Mark Harmon. (R)
- 9.30 **CSI: NY**. Mac and the team investigate the murder of a college student, focusing their investigation on his room-mate, who has been printing counterfeit money.
- 10.30 **Law & Order: Special Victims Unit**. A teenage disappears after making a shocking confession.
- 11.30 **Forensic Files**. (R)
- 12.00 **SuperCasino**. 4.00 Great Artists. (R) 4.25 Divine Designs. (R) 4.50 County Secrets. (R) 5.00 Hana's Helpline. (R) 5.10 The Milkshake! Show. (R) 5.35 Thomas & Friends. (R) 5.45 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

Digital

- ITV2 4.50 Film: Free Willy (1993) 7.10 Film: Kangaroo Jack (2003). Comedy, starring Jerry O'Connell and Anthony Anderson. 9.20 Take Me Out – The Gossip. 9.45 Film: Knocked Up (2007). Romantic comedy, starring Seth Rogen, Katherine Heigl and Paul Rudd.
- ITV3 3.55 Agatha Christie's Poirot 4.55 A Touch of Frost 7.00 Rosemary & Thyme 8.00 Doc Martin 9.00 Foyle's War 11.00 Film: The Postman Always Rings Twice (1981)
- ITV4 3.40 Film: On Her Majesty's Secret Service (1969) 6.30 Live Africa Cup of Nations. The second quarter-final (Kick-off 700pm). 9.30 Film: Tango & Cash (1989). Action adventure, with Sylvester Stallone and Kurt Russell. 11.35 Film: Charley Varrick (1973)
- BBC THREE 7.00 Doctor Who 7.45 Doctor Who Confidential 8.00 Top Gear 9.00 Film: Tropic Thunder (2008) 10.40 Family Guy 11.25 American Dad!
- BBC FOUR 7.00 Survivors: Nature's Indestructible Creatures 8.00 Natural World: The Last Grizzly of Paradise Valley 9.00 Borgen 11.00 Top of the Pops: 1977 11.35 Soul Deep: The Story of Black Popular Music
- E4 1.35 Hollyoaks 4.10 Perfect Couples 5.05 Scrubs 6.05 The Big Bang Theory 7.00 Happy Endings 7.35 How I Met Your Mother 8.00 Rules of Engagement 8.30 The Big Bang Theory 9.00 Film: Trading Places (1983). Comedy, starring Dan Aykroyd and Eddie Murphy. 11.20 The Big Bang Theory
- FILM 2.45 Battle for the Planet of the Apes (1973) 4.30 Tristan and Isolde (2006) 6.55 Guess Who (2005) 9.00 The Wrestler (2008). Drama, with Mickey Rourke and Marisa Tomei. 11.20 A History of Violence (2005)

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Sunday TV

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Choice

BBC1

BBC2

ITV1

Channel 4

Channel 5

Digital



THE HOTEL

Channel 4, 8pm

Admittedly, it can't be easy running a hotel; having the ability to keep everybody happy all the time and doing it through those stubborn gritted teeth with a pseudo-friendly grin plastered across your face. But if Basil Fawlty can do it, Mark Jenkins is going to make damn sure he can. The Grosvenor's manager has had somewhat of a brainwave this week, as he decides to open the hotel's nightclub. Where his germ of an idea falls down, though, is when Christian gets giddy about his 'perfect solution' of the club's theme being 'omni-sexual' — even offering to go out in full-drag get-up complete with semi-naked men by way of promoting his idea.

6.00 Breakfast. 7.35 Match of the Day. (R) 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00 The Big Questions.** 11.00 Sunday Politics; Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.05 Match of the Day Live.** 2.30 Live Six Nations Rugby Union. **5.00 Songs of Praise.** **5.35 Antiques Roadshow.** (R)

6.35 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.

7.00 Countryfile. Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison explore the Blackdown Hills on the Devon and Somerset border, while John Craven investigates Britain's fall in organic food sales. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.

8.00 Call the Midwife. A baby girl is snatched from her pram, uniting the community in a search for the missing child. Cynthia's latest patient falls ill, jeopardising her chances of happiness.

9.00 Bomber Boys. Actor Ewan McGregor and his pilot brother Colin explore the role RAF Bomber Command played during the Second World War and Colin learns to fly a Lancaster bomber.

10.30 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.

10.55 Live Super Bowl XLVI. New England Patriots v New York Giants (Kick-off 11.25pm). Mark Chapman presents coverage of American football's showpiece match, held at the Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

4.00 Weatherview. 4.05 BBC News.

6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. **10.00 Something for the Weekend.** 11.30 Film: I Know Where I'm Going. (1945) Romantic drama, starring Wendy Hiller and Roger Livesey. **1.00 EastEnders.** 2.55 Film: The Shooting Party. (1985) Period drama, starring Edward Fox. **4.30 Escape to the Country.** (R) 5.15 Ski Sunday.

6.00 The Last Explorers.

The story of John Muir, one of the founders of America's National Park movement, who worked to persuade institutions and the general public of the importance of the environment.

7.00 Queens of British Pop. A celebration of female singers over the past 50 years. (R)

8.00 Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson and James May learn about China's expanding car industry, and Richard Hammond immerses himself in the world of Nascar at a race in Texas. With guest Matt LeBlanc.

9.00 Toughest Place to Be a Fisherman. Cornish fisherman Andy Giles works in a coastal village in Sierra Leone.

10.00 Match of the Day 2. Including highlights of Chelsea v Manchester United.

10.55 Frank Skinner's Opinionated. With Greg Davies and Victoria Coren. (R)

11.25 Rugby Union: Six Nations Highlights.

12.10 Ski Sunday. (R) 12.55 Film: The Day of the Triffids. (1962) Sci-fi thriller, starring Howard Keel. 2.30 BBC News. 4.05 Close.

6.00 CITV: Mini CITV. 7.25 CITV. 9.25 ITV News. **9.30 Ade in Britain.** (R) 10.30 Dinner Date. (R) 11.30 Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **12.30 ITV News; Weather.** 12.40 Murder, She Wrote. (R) 1.40 Film: Columbo: Murder, Smoke and Shadows. (1989) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk. **3.35 Vera.** (R) 5.35 Regional News; Weather. 5.45 ITV News; Weather.

6.00 Harry Hill's TV Burp. Comic review of the week's small-screen highlights. (R)

6.25 Dancing on Ice. The 11 remaining celebrities skate to some of the biggest pop songs of all time as they continue their battle to impress the judges and win public votes.

8.30 Wild at Heart. Du Plessis starts to believe he is being haunted by the ghost of Peeters. Danny and Ed make a rash decision that endangers everything they have been working toward.

9.30 Dancing on Ice: The Skate Off. The two lowest-scoring couples compete.

10.05 That Sunday Night Show. With Larry Lamb and Ross Noble.

10.35 ITV News: Weather.

10.50 Whitechapel. Chandler and Miles investigate the deaths of four people. (R)

11.50 Anglo-Welsh Cup Rugby Union. Action from the fourth round of pool fixtures.

12.40 The Zone. ITV News Headlines. **2.00 Ladette to Lady.** Australia. (R) 2.50 ITV Nightscreen. 5.30 ITV Morning News.

6.00 The Treacle People. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 That Paralympic Show. (R) 7.25 Sailing: America's Cup Uncovered. (R) 7.55 T4: The Album Chart Show Introduces – Cover Drive. (R) 8.05 T4: One Tree Hill. (R) 8.55 T4: Countdown to the NME Awards 2012. (R) 9.10 T4: Hollyoaks. (R) 11.45 T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.20 T4: Shipwrecked: The Island. 1.20 T4: The Simpsons. (R) 1.55 T4: The Simpsons. (R) 2.30 Film: New in Town. (2009) Premiere. Romantic comedy, starring Renee Zellweger. 4.20 Team Time. 5.25 Deal or No Deal.

6.25 Channel 4 News.

6.55 4thought.tv. Human rights activist Ben Rawlence discusses foreign aid.

7.00 Hugh's Three Hungry Boys. The boys hunt for food on Asparagus Island off Cornwall's Kynance Cove. Last in the series.

8.00 The Hotel. Manager Mark holds a singles' night.

9.00 FILM: The Time Traveler's Wife. (2009) Premiere. A woman falls for a time traveller, but his journeys back and forth in her life put a strain on their marriage.

Romantic sci-fi drama, with Rachel McAdams and Eric Bana.

11.10 FILM: Alien Resurrection. (1997) Sci-fi thriller sequel, with Sigourney Weaver.

1.15 Film: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. (2003) Horror remake, starring Jessica Biel. **2.55 The Guides.** (R) 3.10 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 3.50 90210. (R) 4.30 My Dream Farm. (R) 5.25 Countdown. (R)

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. 6.05 Roary the Racing Car. (R) 6.15 Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) 6.25 Fireman Sam. (R) 6.35 Harry and His Bucket Full of Dinosaurs. (R) 6.50 Castle Farm. (R) 6.55 Igarn Ogarn. (R) 7.05 Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) 7.15 Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) 7.25 Family! (R) 7.35 Make Way for Noddy. (R) 7.50 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) 7.57 Milkshake! Monkey. (R) 8.00 Little Princess. (R) 8.15 The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) 8.30 Angelina Ballerina. (R) 8.50 Rupert Bear. (R) 9.00 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 9.15 The Mr Men Show. (R) 9.25 Roary the Racing Car. (R) 9.40 Mist: Sheepdog Tales. (R) 10.00 Grey's Anatomy. (R) 11.00 Cowboy Builders. (R) 12.00 Police Interceptors. (R) 1.05 Film: Shanghai Noon. (2000) Comedy Western, starring Jackie Chan and Owen Wilson. **3.10 Film:** Pete's Dragon. (1977) Musical fantasy, starring Jim Dale. **5.20 Film:** The Mask of Zorro. (1998) Swashbuckling adventure, starring Antonio Banderas.

8.00 World's Scariest Near Misses. People who have stared death in the face — and survived. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 FILM: 300. (2006) Fantasy adventure, starring Gerard Butler.

11.20 FILM: Road House 2: Last Call. (2006) Action thriller sequel, starring Jonathon Schaech.

1.00 SuperCasino. 4.00 Rough Guide to Beaches. (R) **4.10 Great Scientists.** (R) 4.35 Divine Designs. (R) 5.00 Hana's Helpine. (R) 5.10 The Milkshake! Show. (R) 5.35 Thomas & Friends. (R) 5.45 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

ITV2
4.25 Film: Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home (1995) **6.25 Film:** King Kong (2005) Fantasy adventure remake, starring Naomi Watts. **10.00 The Only Way Is Essex.** 10.45 Film: Funny People (2009) Comedy drama, starring Adam Sandler and Seth Rogan.

ITV3

3.50 Film: Carry On Screaming (1966) **5.50 Agatha Christie's Poirot.** 9.00 Lewis. A college master is found dead at the university's astronomical observatory. **11.00 Cracker.**

ITV4

3.20 Film: Stargate (1994) **5.45 Film:** Flash Gordon (1980) **8.00 Anglo-Welsh Cup Rugby Union.** 9.00 Cops with Cameras. **10.00 Africa Cup of Nations.** 11.00 Film: We Own the Night (2007) Drama, starring Joaquin Phoenix.

BBC THREE

7.00 Junior Doctors: Your Life in Their Hands **8.00 Young Tailor of the Year.** 9.00 Being Human. **10.00 Family Guy.** 10.45 American Dad! **11.30 Sun, Sex and Suspicious Parents**

BBC FOUR

7.00 Sykes 7.30 Film: Carry On Loving (1970) Comedy, starring Sid James. **9.00 The Cricketer Greats.** 9.45 Hattie 11.10 Film: Son of Babylon (2009) Premiere. Drama, starring Shazad Hussain and Yasser Talib.

E4

4.30 Samantha Who? 4.55 Being Erica 5.55 9.0210 6.50 Film: Romancing the Stone (1984) Comedy adventure, starring Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner. **9.00 Desperate Housewives.** 11.00 Skins

FILM4

3.00 In Good Company (2004) **5.10 The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill, But Came Down a Mountain.** (1995) 7.00 Eragon (2006) Fantasy adventure, starring Edward Speleers. **9.00 Pan's Labyrinth.** (2006) Period fantasy, starring Ivana Baquero. **11.20 Babel.** (2006) Drama, starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett.

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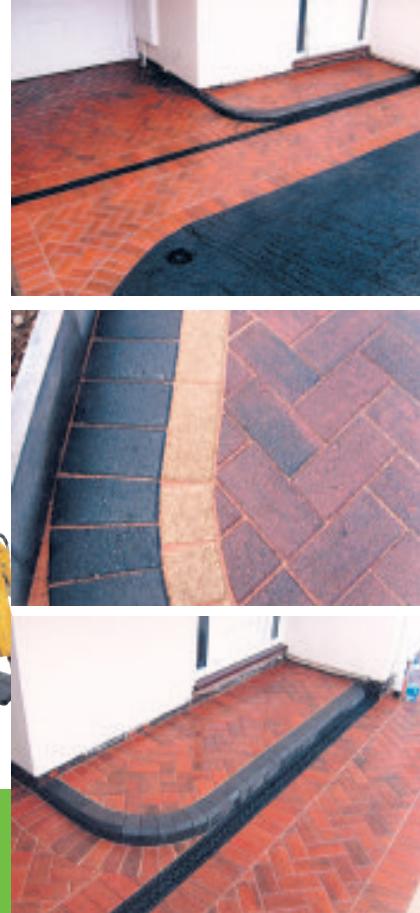
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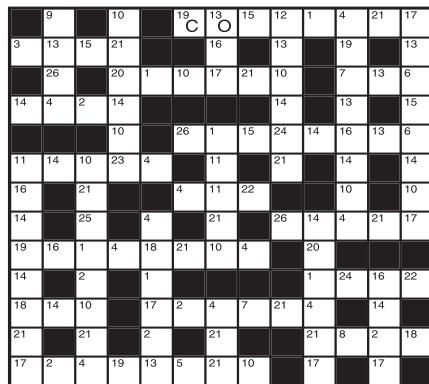


Brain Gym

No.154

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	Z	P	3	J	4	B	5	Q	6	S	7	Y	8	V	9	O	10	X	11	K	12	G	13
14	C	I	R	U	N	H	F	M	T	A	L	W	D	O									

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 3. Almost begin to embark - that's right (9)
- 8. Give a hand signal when this approaches the shore (4)
- 9. Learning to recognise a foothold on the mountain (9)
- 10. A kind that is made to sally (6)
- 11. One who sums up the newly creature (5)
- 14. Change the level of the surface, with head (5)
- 15. Depression for the theologian, by the sound of it (4)
- 16. Went boating and fell out! (5)
- 17. What the abbot expects to be, as far as holy orders are concerned! (6)
- 18. Right kind of life for pension (4)
- 19. Birds whose flight is ground-controlled? (5)
- 20. Just the thing for the high-stepper (5)
- 21. Cramped accommodation may well be barred (4)
- 22. Too early for the Mayflower? (5)
- 23. It would be carried by the chairman (5)
- 24. Show off the United Nations in uninteresting surroundings (6)
- 25. Split completely in a sorrowful way (9)
- 26. Small plots of land mentioned in Marco-
ni's letters (4)
- 27. One who faces the wall (9)

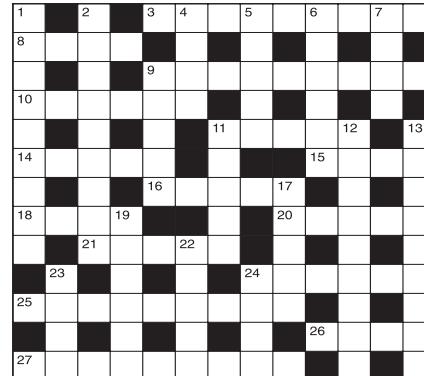
Quick Clues:

Across

- 3. Escort (9)
- 8. Merit (4)
- 9. Monarch (9)
- 10. Stress (6)
- 11. Lift (5)
- 14. Bisect (5)
- 15. Level (4)
- 16. Harvests (5)
- 18. Not any (4)
- 20. Trunk (5)
- 21. Late (5)
- 24. Charcoal (6)
- 25. Incessant (9)
- 26. Brink (4)
- 27. Recovers (9)
- 1. Loud hailer (9)
- 2. Ferocious (9)
- 4. Diving bird (4)
- 5. Musical drama (5)
- 6. Delight (6)
- 7. Near (4)
- 9. Derisive smile (5)
- 11. Willing (5)
- 12. All (9)
- 13. Meet (9)
- 17. Purloin (5)
- 19. Christian festival (6)
- 22. Thick (5)
- 23. Belt (4)
- 24. Tend (4)

Down

- 1. Frightened by an undefined article, we refused to work (3-6)
- 2. Charges too much? (9)
- 4. Subtle blending provides quality of sound (4)
- 5. Went boating and fell out! (5)
- 6. What the abbot expects to be, as far as holy orders are concerned! (6)
- 7. Right kind of life for pension (4)
- 9. Birds whose flight is ground-controlled? (5)
- 11. Though born elsewhere, he produces a legal right to retention of property (5)
- 12. Turned up in a nosy way (9)
- 13. Facts that place genuine restrictions about one (9)
- 17. Agree with the amount scored (5)
- 19. Acquires 9 Across (6)
- 22. Ill-treatment for Lincoln around America (5)
- 23. Timber transaction (4)
- 24. Escape from most of the Navy (4)



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Sock; 3 Herdsman; 8 Rank; 9 Hostages; 11 Keeping watch; 13 Notice; 14 Stupor; 17 Strawberries; 20 Headage; 21 Hale; 22 Painter; 23 Contagious; 24 Striking; 25 Content; 26 Dastardly; 8 Magic; 9 Nose; 10 Disobedient; 11 Orient; 15 Private; 16 Obtain; 18 Trail; 19 Whip. QUIK - Across: 1 Pick; 3 Advocate; 8 Same; 9 Flatness; 11 Illegitimate; 13 Luxury; 14 Escape; 17 Presentiment; 20 Original; 21 Fame; 22 Preceded; 23 News. Down: 1 Possibly; 2 Complex; 4 Delete; 5 Optimistic; 6 Alert; 7 Easy; 10 Aggressive; 12 Restless; 15 Average; 16 Insane; 18 Raise; 19 Pomp.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

6	9		2	8				
2	7		4	8		6		
		5				1	9	
9	2	1						
	4					3		
			6	9				
7				9	5			
	5	4	6		7	8		
8		7	5		2	4		

Seven great games in one!

CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS
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OPENING SPRING 2012 - SECRETS WILL BE REVEALED!

A behind the scenes walking tour, coach-inclusive two-day break departing April 14, June 16, August 18 and October 27

Opening spring, this not-to-be-missed behind-the-scenes studio walking tour is one of the most exciting visitor attractions to have opened in years, and an absolute 'must-see, must-do' for Harry Potter fans everywhere.

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One of the most exciting visitor attractions to have opened in years!

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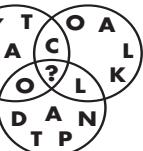
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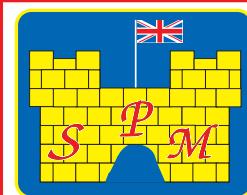
Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
The letter represented by the question mark is L. Napoleon, Cromwell, Wolseley, all military commanders.



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BACK ROAD

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Modern Town House. Accommodation includes: Entrance Hall, WC, Study, Well Appointed Kitchen/Diner, Lounge, Three Bedrooms including Master with Built in Wardrobes and En Suite Shower Room, Family Bathroom. Benefits include Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking, Single Garage. Viewing via this office on 01384 277701.

GORNAL NEW



NEW STREET

£535pcm

End Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens, Garage

SELDLEY NEW



NETHERBY ROAD

£570pcm

Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, WC, Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished

KINGSWINFORD NEW



CAMBERLEY ROAD

£575pcm

Moderate Terrace Property, Lounge, Dining Room, WC, Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking

WORDSLY NEW



BRIDGE CRT, KINVER STREET

£425pcm

Ground Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Electric Heating, Carpets & Curtains, Unfurnished

KINGSWINFORD NEW



WINDERMERE DRIVE

£695pcm

Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Shower Room, Four Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished

PENSNETT NEW



CHURCH STREET

£550pcm

Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Utility, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Available Immediately

WALL HEATH NEW



BLAZE PARK

£750pcm

Mid Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Third Reception Room, Utility, Three Bedrooms, En suite, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking

PENSNETT NEW



AVON CLOSE

£575pcm

Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens

WORDSLY NEW



MARINE CRESCENT

£550pcm

Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Garden, Off Road Parking

KINGSWINFORD NEW



RAGEES ROAD

£325pcm

Purpose Built Studio Style Flat, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom Area, Shower Room, Unfurnished, Communal Gardens, Off Road Parking

GORNAL NEW



PRIORS MILL

£530pcm

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CROWNOKES DRIVE

£495pcm

Purpose Built Flat, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen Area, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Unfurnished.

HIGH STREET

£650pcm

Lounge, Kitchen, Four Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking, Single Garage

CHARTERFIELD DRIVE

£425pcm

Flat, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Unfurnished, Off Road Parking, Available Immediately

BRAITHWAITE DRIVE

£575pcm

Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas central heating, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking, Unfurnished

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EAGLE PLACE

£370pcm

Modern Apartment, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Electric Heating, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking

PEDMORE



LANSDOWNE CRT, HAGLEY ROAD

£595pcm

Ground Floor Apartment, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Unfurnished, Communal Gardens, Off Road Parking.

KINVER



FOSTER CRESCENT

£395pcm

Large Studio Flat, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Bedroom, Bathrooms, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Side & Rear Garden

BRIERLEY HILL



FOXDALE DRIVE

£395pcm

Modern property, lounge, kitchen, one bedroom, bathroom with shower, electric heating, off road parking,

KINGSWINFORD



WORDSLY



MILKING BANK



GARRICK CLOSE

£625pcm

Modern Apartment, Entrance, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen, WC, Two Bedrooms, En Suite, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Allocated Parking, Available Immediately

BRIERLEY HILL



WESTWOOD STREET

£525pcm

Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Conservatory, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Electric Heating, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking for 2/3 Cars.

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The top property guide for Stourbridge, Dudley, Halesowen and Kidderminster



This dormer-style property, featuring double garage, is on the market with Taylors, for offers based on £249,950

Property in cul-de-sac is close to countryside

ENJOYING an enviable position, with adjoining woods to the side, this most impressive semi-detached dormer-style home is superbly located within a highly sought after address.

Situated at the head of the cul-de-sac, number 74

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shops within nearby Lawnswood Road and both Kingswinford and Stourbridge town centres.

Available for offers based on £249,950, the property includes gas central heating, uPVC double glazing and a security alarm system.

Fireplace

An entrance porch leads to a reception hall, lounge with feature brick-built fireplace and separate dining room.

A good-sized dining-kitchen has plenty of wall and base units and built-in storage. Also on this floor is bedroom two with built-in wardrobes and a refitted bathroom. Off the first floor landing, bedrooms one and three complete the accommodation.

There is a double garage and an established rear garden.

For further details, or to arrange a viewing, call Taylors on 01384 401777.



A brick-built fireplace makes for a nice focal point in the home's lounge



A large established rear garden is another of the property's selling points

TOWN & COUNTRY

PROPERTY SERVICES

WOODGATE WAY BELBROUGHTON


£850PCM

A Well presented refurbished and deceptively spacious three bedroom semi detached property situated in a much sought after residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, breakfast room, kitchen, downstairs cloakroom, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, rear garden and driveway affording off road parking. **UNFURNISHED**
DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

EGGINGTON ROAD WOLLASTON


£695PCM

An extremely well presented detached, three bedroom town house, situated in a popular residential location. Accommodation comprises of entrance hall, cloakroom, WC, integrated fridge freezer, dish washer and washer dryer, lounge, conservatory, bathroom and three bedrooms - master with en-suite. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: May Consider PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

BROMLEY LANE KINGSWINIFORD


£650PCM

A well presented and spacious three bedroom semi-detached property situated in a popular residential location. The accommodation to comprise of: Porch, entrance hall, sitting room, lounge, fitted kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, garage and an attractive rear garden. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

WOODSTOCK CLOSE WORDSLEY


£595PCM

A three bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, downstairs cloakroom, lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having double glazing, gas central heating, rear patio area and a single garage located at the front and a detached garage to the rear. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES SMOKERS: NO PETS: NO**

QUANTOCK ROAD PENFIELDS


£525PCM

A deceptively spacious well presented mid terrace property with accommodation to comprise of: Porch, entrance hall, kitchen, lounge, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, enclosed rear garden and en-bloc garage. **UNFURNISHED CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO DSS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

BRACKEN PARK GARDENS WORDSLEY


£485PCM

An extremely well presented fully furnished One Apartment, First Floor Apartment, benefitting from Electric Heating, Double Glazing and Off Road Parking. Accommodation comprises: Entrance Hall with Entryphone System leading to Private Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom and Bathroom. In addition the property benefits from communal gardens and allocated Off Road Parking. **PART FURNISHED, DSS: No PETS: No CHILDREN: No SMOKERS: No.**


GRANGE LANE WOLLESCOTE

A delightful Traditional Three Bedroom Detached property in a popular location and benefiting from Gas Central Heating, Large Rear Garden and Double Glazing. **UNFURNISHED CHILDREN: Yes PETS: No DSS: No**

£745PCM


EDALE CLOSE KINGSWINIFORD

A superb three bedroom detached bungalow situated in a sought after residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, stairs, cloakroom, lounge, fitted kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing and off road parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£675PCM


DERRY CLOSE HARBOURNE

A Spacious three bedroom semi detached property within access to the University and Queen Elizabeth Hospital with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, garage and off road parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£650PCM


PARK VIEW ROAD WOLLESCOTE

A Superb traditional three bedroom detached property set in a quiet cul de sac location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, through lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, enclosed rear garden and fore garden with sweeping grand driveway affording off road parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£625PCM


ROOKERY ROAD WOMBOURNE

A Charming two bedroom mid terrace cottage style property situated within a highly sought after location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance porch, lounge, kitchen/diner, rear hall, ground floor bathroom and two double bedrooms. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, rear garden and off road parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£575PCM


COLUMBUS AVENUE MERRY HILL

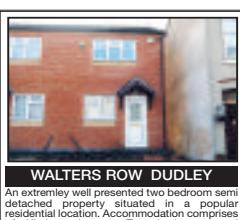
A prestigious two bedroom, third floor apartment situated close to all the amenities of the Merry Hill Complex with accommodation to comprise of: Reception hall, through lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom and Allocated Off Road Parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO PETS: NO CHILDREN: May Consider CHILDREN: No SMOKERS: No**

£550 ppcm


BIRCHWOOD WALK KINGSWINIFORD

A spacious and well maintained, modern semi detached two bedroom bungalow situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Reception hall, lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing and a majority of the property there is an attractive rear garden and garage. **PART FURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£525PCM


WALTERS ROW DUDLEY

An extremely well presented two bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Reception hall, lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing and off road parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: MAY CONSIDER CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£525PCM


BELLE VUE ROAD BRIERLEY HILL

A well presented three bedroom semi detached property in a popular residential location. The accommodation to comprise of: Reception hall, through lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, bathroom and three bedrooms. The property further benefits from gas central heating, double glazing and rear garden with parking in the fore. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£575PCM


LONDON HEIGHTS DUDLEY

A Three Bedroom Detached property situated in a residential location with accommodation comprising of: Porch, lounge/diner, kitchen with both oven and hob, two bedrooms, bathroom and three bedrooms. The property further benefits from gas central heating, double glazing, double glazing and rear garden. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£550PCM


CLARENCE STREET UPPER GORNAL

A very well presented Two Bedroom Starter Home with Accommodation comprising: Lounge/Diner, Kitchen with both oven and hob, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower over bath. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating, off road parking and en bloc garage. **UNFURNISHED DSS: YES CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£525PCM


PERRYHILL ROAD QUINTON

A two Bedroom Apartment situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower over bath. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating, off road parking and en bloc garage. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO PETS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£515PCM


GOSPEL END ROAD SEDGLEY

An extremely well presented first floor one bedroom apartment situated in a popular residential location. The accommodation to comprise of: Lounge, inner lobby with collective entrance, galley kitchen, bathroom and three bedrooms. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing and part allocated parking. **UNFURNISHED DSS: MAY CONSIDER PETS: NO CHILDREN: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£475PCM


VALLEY ROAD LYME

A Spacious three bedroom mid terraced property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, through lounge, dining room, kitchen, two good sized bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing and off road parking and an enclosed rear garden. **UNFURNISHED DSS: MAY CONSIDER CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£450PCM


GEORGE ROAD HALESOWEN

A Well presented two bedroom Mid Terraced property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, through lounge diner, fully fitted kitchen, two good sized bedrooms & bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, off road parking and rear garden. **UNFURNISHED DSS: YES CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£450PCM


SEYMOUR ROAD WOLLESCOTE

A two bedroom semi detached property with accommodation to comprise lounge, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from gas central heating, double glazing, off road parking and rear garden. **UNFURNISHED DSS: YES CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£420


MADELEY ROAD KINGSWINIFORD

A two bedroom first floor apartment with accommodation to comprise of: Hallway, lounge, kitchen with both oven and hob, two bedrooms and bathroom with shower over bath. The property also benefits from partial gas central heating and part double glazing and parking at the rear of the property. **UNFURNISHED DSS: YES CHILDREN: YES PETS: YES SMOKERS: YES**

£400PCM


CANTERBURY CLOSE ROWLEY REGIS

A very well presented two bedroom apartment situated on the first floor of a modern block of flats. The accommodation to comprise of: entrance hall, lounge, kitchen and two bedrooms and bathroom with shower. The property also benefits from allocated parking space and communal grounds. **UNFURNISHED DSS: NO PETS: MAY CONSIDER CHILDREN: MAY CONSIDER SMOKERS: NO**

£395PCM


FOXDALE DRIVE BRIERLEY HILL

A extremely well presented modern two bedroom semi detached house situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Lounge, fitted kitchen, first floor landing with built in airing cupboard, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating and allocated parking. **VIEWING ESSENTIAL DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO SMOKERS: NO PETS: NO**

£395PCM


FOXDALE DRIVE BRIERLEY HILL

A extremely well presented modern two bedroom semi detached house situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Lounge, fitted kitchen, first floor landing with built in airing cupboard, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating and allocated parking. **VIEWING ESSENTIAL DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO**

£395PCM

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— or email: —
lettings@townandcountrypropertyservices.co.uk


BARN CLOSE STOURBRIDGE

An extremely well presented one bedroom first floor flat with private entrance, open plan living room, kitchen and bathroom. The property further benefits from double glazing and electric heating. **UNFURNISHED DSS: Yes PETS: No CHILDREN: No Smokers: No Available: 26/04/2010 £365 PCM**


HIGH STREET WORDSLEY

A well presented one bedroom first floor apartment with private entrance, open plan living room, kitchen and bathroom. The property further benefits from double glazing and electric heating. **UNFURNISHED DSS: No Pets: No Children: No Smokers: No Available: 31/03/2010 £350 pcm**

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Lost & Found

LOST—Large male tabby, chipped, nervous but very sweet, from Penn, Bradmore area may have strayed. 07792 539622.

Religious Notices

Christadelphian

BIBLE ANSWERS TO TODAY'S PROBLEMS The problem of sin. February 5 at 6pm. The Community Hall, High Street, Kingswinford. Or write to The Christadelphians, FREEPOST W191 Kingswinford DY6 9BT for free information pack or ring 01384 278985 for recorded message.

personal

waldrons  Telephone 0500 811 899
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GENTLEMAN, 74. Medium build, enjoys walking and meals out. WLTM lady of similar age to enjoy outings together.

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Ilh health forces sale. £360.
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The Fiat 500, popular with private owners and a star in the business city car awards once again

Fourth business win for Fiat's super 500 model

It's been an undoubted success with the UK's private buyers, but the Fiat 500 continues to show its superiority among the business community, after scooping the City Car honours in the 2012 BusinessCar Awards, for the fourth consecutive year.

the breadth of the popular city car's offer and appeal.

"Fiat's 500 has again proved to be a business car market favourite, and Fiat's advancement with its TwinAir technology has enhanced the excellent city car's appeal to the sector," says Paul Barker, editor, BusinessCar. "The readers of BusinessCar are obviously fans of the 500's combination of fun and frugality, having picked it as their favourite city car for the fourth year in a row."

No stranger to awards, the 500 has a long list of honours to its name, including Car of the Year in 2008, along with several from the UK's leading consumer and trade titles.

"Four entries and four straight wins

is wonderful news and a tribute to the Fiat 500, which continues to appeal both to private customers and fleets," says Elena Bernardelli, marketing director, Fiat Group Automobiles and Ireland.

"The 500 is a car that thousands of people want to have as their own, but it's good to see how popular it is as a serious business tool too."

Available with a choice of ultra-low emissions Euro 5 engines: 85bhp 0.9-litre TwinAir, 69 bhp 1.2-litre and 100bhp 1.4-litre petrol, and 95 bhp 1.3-litre MultiJet turbodiesels, the Fiat 500 is available in a variety of trim levels. With a starting price of £9,960, the 500 represents outstanding value for money.



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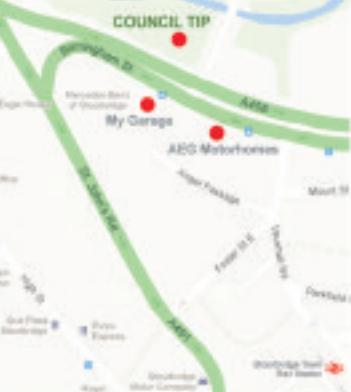
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Advertisement

World Speedway Champion Greg Hancock Returning to Cradley Heath

Cradley Heathens legend and current World Speedway Champion Greg Hancock is returning home to where his career started 14 years ago. Fans will have the chance to meet Greg when he opens the new Motor Market car dealership site in Newtown Lane, Cradley Heath on Saturday 17th March at 12pm.



Greg made almost 400 appearances for the club, which gave his career a start back in 1989. American Greg crowned a fantastic season last year by becoming World Champion for the 2nd time at the age of 41.

Motor Market co owner Adam Bridge said "It's very exciting for us to be involved in bringing Greg back to Cradley Heath. We know exactly what speedway and Greg mean to the people of Cradley and giving Greg's fans the opportunity to meet and congratulate him in person will be fantastic. It really should be a great day."

To add to the occasion Carol's famous Heathens pork sandwiches and refreshments will be provided free from the original catering van used on the Dudley Wood site. A raffle with prizes including 2 Dudley Heathens season tickets, further special guests and children's entertainment with a bouncy castle and face painting will all be on site.

Greg's rare appearance back in the UK is largely thanks to Colin Pratt his former Heathens boss

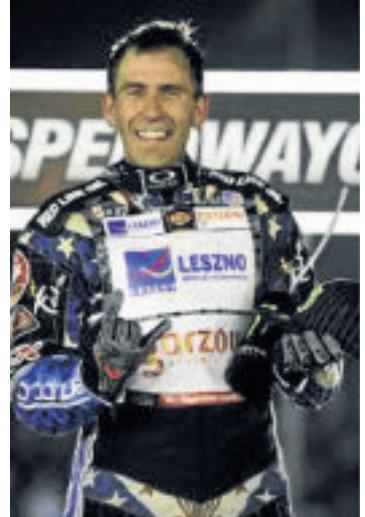


who brought him to Cradley back in the late 80's. Colin, now in charge at Coventry Bees, has assembled a world class field of top stars, led by Greg to ride in The Brandonapolis Open meeting Friday 16th March at Brandon.

A third opportunity to pay tribute to Greg will be on the evening of Saturday 17th March at The Venue, Dudley from 8.30pm where Greg will take to the stage as the star attraction along with Jan O Pederson, Colin and other surprise guests in an event organised by the Heathens Supporters Club. Tickets are available at £10 and can be purchased at www.dudleyheathens.co.uk or contact HSSC on 07766 745681.

Motor Markets Dean Bridge added, "It should be a very special weekend for the many people still fanatical about speedway in the area. You only need to attend the British Grand Prix in Cardiff each summer to see the amount of goodwill and support still given to Greg by the Cradley fans, I've no doubt, even today we still regard him as one of our own."

I would doubt whether there's ever been a more popular Speedway World Champion. We could not wish for a better ambassador for the sport or our town. I know the Heathens fans are very proud of him and his achievements and hope they turn out in force to welcome him back to Cradley Heath."



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The new Swift Sport looks set to be a winner with its multi-spoked wheels

Suzuki's Swift – sporty on the road with sharper steering and suspension

Swift and sure from Suzuki's style team

SUZUKI'S swiftest Swift proved a big hit with youngish owners looking for an affordable (to buy and insure) warm hatch.

So little wonder the new Sport model, on sale in January, is more a step forward than a leap into the automotive unknown, with more of what's good and a bit less of what isn't.

In the good column are power and economy, both boosted by a gentle reworking of the existing engine (now 134bhp from its 1.6-litre petrol engine) and the addition of a sixth gear to make long motorway drags a bit less of a drag.

There's also been a bit more space added to the length of the new Swift Sport for a slightly roomier interior (still only a four-seater, though) and the addition of cruise control and keyless entry – leave the key in your pocket and the car still knows you're about.

Like the old car, metallic paint is standard at no extra cost (tell that to Audi!).

So to the not so good; this welcome tinkering with an already successful formula has brought a price increase that's rather more than a gentle uplift.

The old Sport cost £12,995 (they're all sold, by the way), so the predicted £14,500 of the new model looks as though the Suzuki price setters knew they had an in-demand model on their hands and priced it accordingly.

Bolder

It's still not overpriced, though, when you consider the reworking you'll find in the little hatchback, designed in Japan, tested on some awkward Yorkshire roads as part of its European acclimatisation and built in Hungary in a plant that's this summer built its two-millionth vehicle.

The last Sport model was hard to pick out from its cheaper, slower siblings. The newcomer is less shy about boasting of its sporting prowess, with a bolder front grille, finned fog lamp housings, side body mouldings and spoiler above rear window. Multi-spoked alloy wheels fill the wheel arches in muscular fashion.

Inside, the changes from non-Sport versions is subtle, with more firmly bolstered front seats about the only obvious change. Not that there's much wrong with the cabin anyway, with room in the rear for two adults and a dashboard that's simple (a good thing) and easy to read.

By Ian Donaldson

In slightly pearly white paint the Swift Sport looks every centimetre the sporty hatch it's intended to be, with blacked out rear-side windows adding a touch of Mafia menace. It looks perfectly pitched at the early-30s and mostly male buyers who Suzuki thinks will fall for the car.

They'll appreciate the car Suzuki's engineers have taken over, making it feel sporty on the road, with a lot of work to make the suspension and steering feel sharper without turning the car into a racetrack refugee.

Like other sporty numbers from Japan (think Honda in particular) the Swift Sport's engine needs to be worked hard for maximum attack.

Rewards

Indeed, change gear at what sounds the right time and you'll miss its verve. This is a car that rewards effort from its driver, who won't mind swapping gears in a box that feels crisp and positive.

Driven with some restraint it will even prove an economical little tiger, with the official fuel average consumption figure better by 10 per cent, at 44.1mpg.

Company car user choosers might also note the newcomer's emissions now slip below the critical 160g/km level. Family car buyers will like the five-star rating all Swifts enjoy in the Euro NCAP tests.

It may be small but there's a proper bigger car feel to the whole machine, a sure sign that painstaking development has followed every change.

That augurs well for a long-term relationship with a car that will bring a smile to many a young man's face. And some older ones too.

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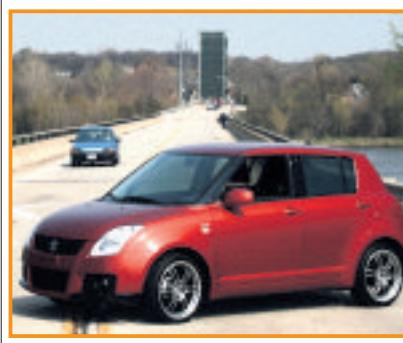
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Stylish – the Suzuki Swift Sport 2012

SPORT

It's a first as Old Hales fail to score

**Old Sihilians 1
Old Halesonians 0**

OLD Halesonians Hockey men's firsts failed to score for the first time this season as they were beaten by fourth-placed Old Sihilians in the West Midlands Premier.

Both teams set up their teams to stop each other scoring. Despite this, Tom Bulted had a chance within 30 seconds of the start, when he watched his reverse stick shot fly just inches wide.

But there were few opportunities. Just before the half-time break Harry Hughes was yellow carded for the visitors and spent 10 minutes in the sin-bin.

After the break Old Sihilians also saw a player sin-binned for a push. The home side were well held by the Hales defensive line.

Soon after the home side returned to full strength, Hales had Paul Harrold sin-binned for consistent bad tackling. A penalty corner drag flick then produced the winner.

Old Hales 5 Bloxwich 3

Old Hales thirds won a game that was crucial to their promotion hopes.

They looked the livelier and Darren Rose broke the deadlock from short range.

Bloxwich levelled from a short corner but Damian Shackleton blasted in a short corner to make it 2-1 at the break.

Early in the second half, Old Hales doubled their lead as Deck Glaze turned the ball in after Adam Hill's shot had been saved.

Bloxwich got back to 3-2 but in the final 10 minutes Charles Palmer scored Hales' fourth and Rose notched again before Bloxwich scored just before the whistle.

Old Hales 3 Streetly 2

Old Halesonians thirds made it six points in two days with a hard-fought win on Sunday.

Streetly scored first and goalkeeper Stuart Andrews did well to stop a second, Old Hales equalised when Damian Shackleton tucked away a penalty flick.

Minutes later he switched the ball at a penalty corner into the path of Deck Glaze before Dan Millichap got the final touch to put Hales 2-1 up at the break.

Shackleton got a third, flicking the ball into the top corner from a penalty corner, but Streetly pulled one back and gave the home side some anxious moments before the final whistle.

Four goals see under-15s swat Wasps

Southam 3 Stourbridge U12 3

HONOURS were shared in a six-goal match in which Arron Finnegan scored twice for Stourbridge.

Tipton Utd 2 Stourbridge U12 B 2

Stourbridge, missing three injured players, started slowly and were 2-0 down at the break.

But a brighter second half saw Liam Hands hit the post before crossing for Nathaniel Connon to pull a goal back.

Hands 1 Stourbridge 2

Hands was the provider again 10 minutes later when substitute Travis Woods popped up for the equaliser.

**Kidderminster Harriers Hawks 4
Stourbridge U14 3**

Stourbridge fought back from four down only to fall just short.

Two soft first-half goals and another two after the break gave Kidderminster the advantage. With 20 minutes left Stourbridge began to fight back with a stunning 25-yarder out of nothing to hit home. Hinckley got a goal back five minutes later with a shot through a crowd of players.

Stourbridge U15 B 3 Hinckley United 1

Stourbridge scored after just seven seconds, Calvin Campbell

Stourbridge FC juniors

charging down a back-pass from the kick-off and finding the net.

Liam Snape played a slide rule pass down the channel for Jamie Chetwood to finish over the onrushing keeper. A third was added on 58 minutes when Liam Snape profited from a scramble to hit home. Hinckley got a goal back five minutes later with a shot through a crowd of players.

Stourbridge U15 B 4 Wordsley Wasps 0

Matthew Nicklin drew first blood to put Stourbridge one up at half-time. An excellent goal slotted in at the near post by Travis Stringer made it two before Cory Grey added a third from the penalty spot.

Newcomer Robert Johnson pinged a delightful volley into the top corner for a debut goal to round off the scoring.

Malvern Town 0 Stourbridge U16 S 0

A much improved performance from Stourbridge who took command of the game from start to finish.

Two good goals from Ryand Hickman and Joe Smith sealed the

win for a well-deserved three points.

Woodford Utd 4 Stourbridge U18 1

Stourbridge started and played the game with 10 men due to a number of injuries.

The game was quite even until Woodford scored direct from a free-kick. Stourbridge kept battling and earned an equaliser when Sam Dickens went one-on-one and slotted home a very neat finish to leave the teams level at the break.

Woodford 4 Dunkirk 2

TIPTON filled their boots again, following up their five goals against Dunkirk in the reverse fixture with a further four.

As early as the sixth minute a corner from the impressive Andrew Westwood was met by Jack Stone who opened the scoring with a header.

Dunkirk immediately levelled with Wright slotting the ball past Neil Page with the Tipton defence missing crucial chances to clear.

In the 28th minute a free-kick, awarded for a foul on Leigh Downing, was deftly lifted over the Dunkirk wall to Nathan Waite who side-footed home.

The hosts were now oozing confidence and Westwood was left open to drill the ball in and give Tipton a 3-1 interval lead.

Tipton started the second half well and extended their lead in the 56th minute when Westwood scored.

The visitors pulled one back in the 70th minute when Alls planted the ball firmly into the Tipton net.

Half-measures sending Stour to danger zone

STOURBRIDGE suffered another setback in their battle to beat the National League One drop by losing out to second-placed Ealing.

The match followed a familiar pattern as Stourbridge fell behind in the first half only to finish strongly.

Dismayed director of rugby Neil Mitchell admitted: "It's the fourth game running this has happened and it just beggars belief. You would expect a team in our position to fall away in the second half, but that isn't happening."

"We won the second half 19-7 against Ealing. It was 17-6 with Fylde, 17-3 with Bees and 18-7 against Blackheath."

Again the damage was caused in the first half as Ealing chalked up three unanswered converted tries. Stourbridge had all the early play and should have put points on the board. Fly-half Chris Reakes was wide of the mark with a drop goal attempt, while winger James Hearn fell short with a long-range penalty.

Ealing took the lead on 17 minutes when winger Phil Chesters chased his own kick-ahead to score. Impressive full-back Peter Hodgkinson drove over in the 24th minute.

Hodgkinson struck again on the half hour after an overlap, a try instigated after Ealing intercepted a wayward pass. Ben Ward converted all three tries.

Stourbridge should have got themselves on the scoreboard before the break when an effective rolling maul resulted in Ealing being camped on their own line for several minutes.

But a series of Stour-

**Stourbridge Saxons 19
Ealing 31**

bridge pick-up and drives produced nothing.

Stourbridge had a mountain to climb in the second half with a 21-0 deficit but were given a glimmer of hope when Ealing were reduced to 14 players in the 46th minute as flanker Jack Clifford was yellow carded for entering a ruck illegally.

Stourbridge took advantage as second row Ben Hughes burrowed his way for a try that Hearn converted.

Hopes of a recovery were dismissed when Ealing went back upfield to clinch a fourth converted try with winger Owen Bruynseels touching down in the corner.

Credit to Stourbridge who kept going and were rewarded with tries from second row Rob Hurrell and Coventry loanee No8 Adrian Hall, both driven over by the pack. In between was a Ward penalty, while Hearn failed to convert Hall's try.

Robins fall to Rangers' determined fightback



Dudley Town, in red, come under pressure during their 3-2 loss at home to Black Country Rangers. The Robins led through Danny Ludlow and Dreniz Bala only for Rangers to level the match through Shane Parkes and Paul Oakley before winning it with a stunning free-kick from league top scorer Stephen Bowes.

A five-star show for Tividale

Tividale 5 Studley 0

FIVE-STAR Tividale took Studley apart.

Their performance might have produced a greater winning margin but for the excellence of visiting keeper Richard Taylor.

In the 17th minute Tividale took the lead when Chris Russell was fouled and Lee Chilton smashed home the free-kick.

Russell doubled the lead just before half-time when he headed home unmarked from eight yards.

Four minutes into the second half they increased their lead with Danny Ashton's well-placed shot from 12 yards. Two minutes later the game was over as a contest when Matt Jukes acrobatically volleyed home from 15 yards.

In a final Tividale flurry, Adam Whattley smacked the ball against the bar in the 85th minute.

His effort was bettered by Chilton in the final minute when the Tividale captain smashed the ball home from 10 yards.

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SPORT

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Gap begins to stretch as Gornal miss out

Gornal 1 Wellington 1

GORNAL lost ground on leaders Black Country Rangers after this West Midlands Premier home draw.

Both teams were happy to take a point from a game that lacked any real quality in possession or in front of goal.

Gornal dominated a scoreless first half but could not break down a well-organised Wellington defence and threaten Dan Tecza in the visitors' goal.

Equally, Wellington started the second half brightly but could not find a breakthrough. Gornal then got themselves back into the game as they pressed for the lead.

However, on 70 minutes Wellington scored against the run of play.

A long ball over the top of the Gornal defence was chased down by Matt Williams, who shot over the stranded John Pemberton and into the empty net.

However, with eight minutes remaining Gornal grabbed a deserved equaliser.

A free-kick from substitute Richard Young was met by Kristian Green who headed home from six yards.

Although not the most convincing display from Gornal, they still remain unbeaten in the league since the end of September.

However, Rangers' win at Dudley Town stretched the gap at the top of the table.

New kit is on offer to sport clubs

NEW sports kits are on offer to teams across the Dudley borough in a bid to raise awareness of the dangers of strokes.

Dudley Stroke Association is working with Dudley PCT to raise awareness.

Roger Edwards, for the association, said: "We are looking to identify local sports teams who would not only benefit from a new sports kit but are also willing to promote the Fast message."

Fast stands for: F face, has someone's face fallen to one side? A arms, can they raise both arms? S speech, is their speech slurred? T time to call 999 if you see any single one of these symptoms. Call 01384 271982 or email mail@dudleystroke-association.org.uk for details.

B team prove to be surprise package

STOURBRIDGE Swimming Club A and B Teams went head to head in the first round of the Worcester Winter League at Droitwich.

The atmosphere on the poolside was electric with the navy and yellow club colours dominating the view.

The A Team took control from the very first race, taking 25 victories and 13 second places out of 40 races.

A hat-trick of individual swim successes went to Becki Cole in the butterfly, freestyle and backstroke. There were two individual

Stourbridge Swimming

wins each for Britt Horton, Nat Dingley, Adam Horton, Alex Westwood and Ed Povey.

Ellie Wood, Aaron Costigan, Joe Hamilton, Phil Harrington, Scott Allin and Tom McCallum added a win apiece.

The swimmer of the night accolade was shared by James Enright, Hamilton and Povey for taking big chunks out of their personal best times.

The B team also did well with second places for Lauren Sanders - making it a one-

two for Stourbridge in the open age group backstrokers - Matt McCallum doing the double with Povey in the freestyle, Michael Sedgley in the 13-year-old backstroke and Sam Matthews hot on the heels of the A team swimmer to claim five points.

B team swimmer of the night was Charlie Jones who represented her team for the first time, swam up an age group and gave the older swimmers a real run for their money.

The A Team finished top, 30 points clear, but the B team proved a real surprise package to be third overall.

The performances delighted team man-

agers John Sanders, Julie Hill and Sam Morgan.

"This puts both teams into a very strong position going into the second round of the league," they said in a statement. "All of our swimmers were outstanding and well deserve their positions in the league."

Result: Stourbridge A 223pts, Worcester 193, Stourbridge B 141, Oldbury 117, Blythe 113.

Anyone interested in joining Stourbridge Swimming Club should contact head coach Stewart Nicklin through the website www.stourswim.co.uk or by calling 07834 689178.

Hancock returns to meet the Heathens' supporters

HEATHENS speedway fans will be flocking to Dudley to welcome back old favourite Greg Hancock.

The reigning world speedway champion won his second crown 14 years after claiming his first and promised a return to his professional roots.

The former Cradley ace made nearly 400 appearances for the old Cradley club and notched more than 4,000 points before their demise.

The 41-year-old, who now lives in Sweden, will take the stage and meet supporters at The Venue Conference and Banqueting Centre, High Street, Dudley on March 17.

He will be joined by a number of former Cradley riders including former world champion and newly-named Heathens coach Jan O Pedersen and Colin Pratt.

Busy

Hancock said: "I know what the Heathens name means to the people and they are just so passionate about their team."

"The Cradley days were special to me and to so many people. It will be nice to come back to England and to see my fans once again."

Heathens chairman Nigel Pearson said: "Greg is a very busy man these days and seldom gets a chance to come to the UK and it will be a very rare appearance for him back where it all started close to the old Dudley Wood."

Tickets cost £10 and are still available at www.dudleyheathens.co.uk or by cheque to HSSC, 2 Caernarvon Way, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 2TR. More details: 07766 745681.

Hancock will also be in Cradley Heath itself on the afternoon of the event between noon and 2pm when he officially opens a new facility at Motor Market on Newton Lane.

Meanwhile, the Heathens will defend their National League Shield against Knockout Cup winners Milden Hall early in the season.

In the cup, Dudley have been drawn against great rivals Buxton in the first round.

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ROCK STEADY, BUT GLASSBOYS LOSE

STOURBRIDGE'S promotion bandwagon suffered a shove towards the side of the road.

Gary Hackett's men are still within striking distance of the Evo-Stik South Premier top spots. But a disappointing weekend brought just one point from three games and culminated in this defeat at Banbury.

The Spencer Stadium hasn't been a happy hunting ground since the Glassboys won promotion to the Premier Division in 2008 and so it proved again on Saturday.

For the third match running Stourbridge conceded an early goal, falling behind after five minutes as Danny Edmund turned on the edge of the Glassboys box and his low shot squeezed inside Lewis Solly's right-hand post. Ricky Johnson almost made it two soon afterwards but his shot was deflected.

The visitors worked themselves back into the match to draw level after 25 minutes. Leon Broadhurst hit a low 25-yard shot that beat Banbury stopper Andrew Kemp but rebounded off the foot of the post and Sam Rock was on hand to turn the ball upwards and Josh Blake head home.

Sam Smith almost reduced the arrears on 69 minutes when his header from a Geddes free-kick forced Kemp to tip over.

Banbury always looked lively in attack and in the 71st minute a misdirected header from McCone fell to Johnson who struck a first-time volley that drew a good save from Solly. Sub Mark Danks then went close at the other end as a pass from Geddes ran through to him, however his shot was blocked by Kemp. In stoppage time at the end Banbury put the result beyond doubt. Solly saved a far-post header but Johnson pounced to crash home his second goal of the afternoon.

The Glassboys were first

DK win through, but find it tough going



James Jefferson crosses for the final try in Dudley Kingswinford's 44-23 win at Mansfield. It proved to be one of the team's toughest matches of the season as the home side began by dominating at the breakdown. But DK pulled through with Jefferson's interception try, after a 50m run, concluding the scoring.

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